

AN INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN,
LITERARY CHARACTER, HISTORICAL AND RELIGIOUS
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

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Presented
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
to
The Faculty of Divinity
in
The University of Edinburgh
December 1953



Dedicated

to

DEBORAH JEAN

PREFACE

Ever since the time of the Reformation the Epistle of James has been a standing Rätsel to New Testament scholars. Luther's objections, of course, were based on the supposed conflict between James' doctrine of justification and that of St. Paul. This is the most widely known problem in the Epistle, but it is not the only one. There is no other book of the New Testament which presents more unsolved problems: Is it an epistle at all? If it is, it certainly is a very peculiar one. Who is the James who claims to be the author? Why was it so late to be included in the official lists of the canonical books? To whom is it addressed, i. e., who are meant by the "twelve tribes in the dispersion"? At what juncture in the history of the early church was it written? Why are so many seemingly unrelated subjects dealt with? "What a chaos!" wrote Luther in the margin of his personal copy. Ever since de Wette's time New Testament scholars have wrestled with these problems but no unanimity has been achieved. It is the purpose of this dissertation to re-examine the evidence and attempt to unravel the persistent problems of the "right strawy Epistle."

The author acknowledges the gracious assistance of Professors William Manson and J. S. Stewart of New College,

University of Edinburgh, the staffs at the New College Library and the Scottish National Library, Dr. Ehlert of the Fuller Theological Seminary Library in Pasadena, California, Rabbi Lupo of the Jewish Community Center Library of Los Angeles, California and Dr. Saul Lieberman, Dean of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York City; the last mentioned for suggestions and information on the literary character of Jewish Haggadic literature.

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CHAPTER I

THE HISTORY OF THE EPISTLE IN THE CHURCH

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORY OF THE EPISTLE IN THE CHURCH¹

A. Before Origen

Strictly speaking, the history of the Epistle of James in the Church begins with Origen, since he is the first to quote it by name and to express himself on the Epistle and its worth. However, there are passages in non-canonical writers before Origen which seem to reveal acquaintance with the Epistle of James. It is the purpose of this section to examine and evaluate the more important of these.

1. The West

Clement of Rome.--The passages in Clement of Rome which are supposed to show knowledge of the Epistle of James have been collected by Mayor² and discussed in detail by Zahn,³

¹For complete discussions of the fate of the Epistle in the Church cf. M. Meinertz, Der Jakobusbrief und sein Verfasser in Schrift und Überlieferung, (Biblische Studien X, Freiburg: Herder, 1905); A. Meyer, Das Rätsel des Jakobusbriefes, (Beihfte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, A. Topelmann: Giessen, 1930), pp. 8-108.

²The Epistle of St. James (3d ed.; London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1913), pp. lxx, lxxi.

³Introduction to the New Testament, Eng. trans. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1909), I, 134, 135.

Spittal¹ and A. Meyer.² Of the many passages cited, one in particular has been given special attention of late.³ This passage has to do with the story of Rahab found in I Clement 12:4. ἦδε ἀπεκρίθη: Εἰσῆλθον μὲν οἱ ἄνδρες, οὓς ἡτεῖτε, πρὸς με, ἀλλ' εὐθέως ἀπῆλθον καὶ πορεύονται τῇ ὁδῷ· ὑποδεικνύουσα αὐτοῖς ἐναλλάξ. Now although Clement mentions (12:3) that Rahab hid the spies in the flax, the emphasis of the story seems to be that she saved them by sending the king's men off in another direction. Of this same incident James writes, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ 'Ραάβ ἡ πόρνη οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιώθη, ὑποδεξαμένη τοὺς ἀγγέλους καὶ ἑτέρα ὁδῷ ἐκβαλοῦσα.⁴ Here no mention is made of the flax at all. This does not mean, of course, that James was ignorant of this aspect of the story but rather that he was emphasizing another phase; viz., that Rahab saved the spies by sending them, not the king's men as in Clement, by another way. Now Young argues that this emphasis of sending the antagonists off in opposite directions, peculiar to Clement and James, but not to be found

¹Der Brief des Jakobus (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1896), pp. 230-236.

²Op. cit., pp. 68-72.

³Cf. F. W. Young, "Relation of I Clement to the Epistle of James," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXVII (1948), 339-345.

⁴ἀγγέλους, though peculiar, must refer to the spies in the Jas. account. ὑποδέχομαι, "to receive as a guest," could hardly refer to the king's men. Some relatively unimportant MSS read καταγκόπους.

either in the Rabbinical writings or in the Fathers before Augustine, is evidence of dependence, and since Clement is not in the habit of following the Old Testament text too carefully, the dependence is in the direction of James on Clement.¹ This conclusion seems unwarranted in the light of the fact that the emphases of Clement and James in their recounting of the Rahab incident are really not the same. In James the spies are sent off by another way, whereas in Clement it is the soldiers. If James was dependent upon Clement here, why the significant change? Actually, the account in the Epistle of James follows more closely the Old Testament record of the event than that of Clement. In the Joshua account Rahab only tells the king's men to "pursue after them quickly." She pleads ignorance as to the direction the spies had gone. (Actually, of course, they hadn't gone anywhere as yet. They were still on the roof under the flax.) Now after the soldiers had gone and the gates of the city were shut, before letting the spies down on the other side of the wall by a cord suspended from the window of her house, Rahab instructed them that they should go to the mountains. This would imply that Rahab knew which direction the king's men had taken; and in fact we are told this in v. 7, "And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords." Thus the account in

¹Young, op. cit., pp. 344, 345.

James simply emphasizes what is already a part of the Old Testament account: that Rahab sent the spies, and not the king's men, in another direction. Dependence in either direction, James on Clement or Clement on James, cannot be demonstrated here.

There are other passages which show similarities between Clement and James such as I Clem. 23:3 with Jas. 1:6f; I Clem. 30:2 with Jas. 4:16; I Clem. 46:5 with Jas. 4:1. I Clem. 38:2 with Jas. 3:13; I Clem. 13:1 with Jas. 1:19-21. In I Clem. 12 and 31 faith and works are combined. The similarities evinced by these passages are not conclusive. Ropes' opinion here is sound: ". . . the likeness is not sufficient to prove literary dependence, but only similar literary associations."¹

The Shepherd of Hermas.--Great differences of opinion exist as to the relationship of the Epistle of James to Hermas. Pfleiderer² thought the Epistle dependent upon Hermas. Mayor³ and Zahn⁴ contended for the reverse being true, while the Oxford Committee expressed doubts as to dependence.⁵ In more

¹A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of James (International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1916), p. 87.

²Primitive Christianity, Eng. trans. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1906-1911), IV, 293 f.

³Op. cit., pp. lxxiv-lxxviii.

⁴Op. cit., I, 135.

⁵The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers by a

recent times Ropes,¹ Dibelius,² and Goodspeed³ have argued for a common background rather than dependence, and Moffatt⁴ along with A. Meyer⁵ (it is necessary to his main thesis) favor dependence of Hermas on James.

Perhaps the most striking similarity is to be found in the common use of δΐψυχος (διψυχία, διψυκέω). Mayor,⁶ Hort,⁷ and Moulton and Milligan⁸ all considered the occurrence of the word in the Epistle of James as its first in literature. Thus the high probability that Hermas in Mand. IX derived the word from James. However, it has recently been pointed out⁹ that where Clement of Rome cites passages

Committee of the Oxford Society of Historical Theology (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), p. 113.

¹Op. cit., pp. 88, 89.

²Der Brief des Jakobus (Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, begründet von H. A. W. Meyer; 7 Aufl.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1921), p. 31.

³An Introduction to the New Testament (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1937), p. 293.

⁴An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament (3d ed.; Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1918), p. 467.

⁵Op. cit., p. 68.

⁶Op. cit., p. 42.

⁷The Epistle of St. James (London: Macmillan and Co., 1909), p. 12.

⁸Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914-1929), p. 166.

⁹O. J. F. Seitz, "Relationship of the Shepherd of Hermas to the Epistle of James," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXIII (1944), p. 133.

including this word δῖψυχος he refers to his source simply as "scripture" (I Clem. 23:3) or "prophetic message" (II Clem. 11:2). In a second article Seitz has shown that the idea of δῖψυχος is closely associated with the rabbinic conception of the two yetsarim and in particular to the idea of the yetser-ha-ra' which leads men to sin.¹ His conclusion is that James, I and II Clement, and Hermas all derive δῖψυχος from some unknown Jewish apocryphon. However, in the light of a host of other parallels, (cf. especially Mand. XII, 1, 1-2 with Jas. 3:2, 4, 8; Mand. III, 1, Sim. V, 6, 5-7 with Jas. 4:5 and Mand. XII, 2, 4; 4, 7; 5, 2 with Jas. 4:7) there is a strong probability that Hermas knew the Epistle of James. Literary dependence could hardly be in the other direction.²

Irenaeus.--Irenaeus, who was born in Asia Minor but who later became Bishop of Lyons (cir. 180-190), did not use the Epistle of James as scripture. However, striking similarities between statements in his writings and those in the Epistle of James seem to indicate that he knew the Epistle.³

¹"Antecedents and Signification of the Term ΔΙΨΥΧΟΣ," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXVI (1947), p. 213.

²Cf. G. H. Rendall, The Epistle of St. James and Judaic Christianity (Cambridge: University Press, 1927), p. 102: "Those who put James after Hermas seem impervious to literary reasonings."

³The opinion of scholars is divided. Meinertz, op. cit., p. 68: "Mir scheint es nun über allen Zweifel erhaben zu sein, dass Irenaeus den Jakobusbrief gekannt und verwertet hat, wenn er ihn auch nicht unter Anführung des Verfassers zitiert." But Ropes, op. cit., p. 90 and M. Dibelius, op. cit., p. 51, say no.

For example, the statement: Abraham . . . amicus factus est dei.¹ It is argued that references to Abraham as a friend of God were very common, but as Hort pointed out,

It is something that it occurs in a passage contrasting the Law of Moses and the Word of Christ as an enlargement and fulfilment of the Law, speaking of superextendi decreta libertatis, et augeri subjectionem quae est ad regem, which looks very like the νόμον τελεῖτε βασιλικόν of 2:8 and νόμον τέλειον τῆς ἐλευθερίας of 1:25.²

Perhaps even more striking is Irenaeus' statement,

Et quia non per haec iustificatur homo, sed in signo data sunt populo, ostentit, quod ipse Abraham sine circumcisione et sine observatione sabbatorum credidit deo, et reputatum est illi ad iustitiam et amicus dei vocatus est.³

The similarity to James is best seen by a comparison with the Vulgate on Jas. 2:23: Credidit Abraham deo et reputatum est illi ad iustitiam et amicus dei appellatus est.

Another reference is found in the first part of the fifth book of his Contra Haereses:

Neque rursus nos aliter discere poteramus, nisi magistrum nostrum videntes, et per auditum nostrum vocem ejus percipientes; uti imitatores quidem operum, factores autem sermonum ejus facti, communionem habeamus cum ipso; a perfecto, et eo qui est ante omnem conditionem, augmentum accipientes.

¹Contra Haereses IV, 13, 4. Migne, Patrologiae Graecae, VII, 1009.

²Op. cit., p. xxvi.

³Contra Haereses IV, 27, 2. Migne, P. G., VII, 1059.

Qui nunc nuper facti sumus, a solo optimo et bono, et ab eo qui habet donationem incorruptibilitatis, in eam, quae est ad eum, similitudinem facti, praedestinati quidem ut essemus, qui nondum eramus, secundum praescientiam Patris, facti autem initium facturae, accipimus in praecognitis temporibus secundum ministrationem Verbi, qui est perfectus in omnibus.¹

The factores sermonum ejus seems to be a play on the of Jas. 1:22. But James and Irenaeus use the phrase differently. In James "hearing" and "doing" are contrasted, whereas Irenaeus places the "hearing" and "doing" parallel.²

The εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἀπαρχὴν τινὰ τῶν αὐτοῦ κτισμάτων of Jas. 1:18 is echoed by Irenaeus' facti autem initium facturae³ and the νόμον τέλειον τὸν τῆς ἐλευθερίας of Jas. 1:25 is echoed by Irenaeus' libertatis lex⁴ which he explains: id est, verbum Dei ab apostolis . . . annuntiantum.⁵

These quotations from Irenaeus would seem to indicate that although the Epistle of James was not for him Holy Scripture, yet he had a knowledge of it. It is important to note that the Epistle was not included in the Muratorian Canon which was formulated about the time of Irenaeus.

¹V, 1, 1. Migne, P. G., VII, 1121.

²Cf. A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 11; "Die Hörer verschwinden hier ganz!"

³V, 1, 1. Migne, P. G., VII, 1121.

⁴IV, 34, 4. Migne, P. G., VII, 1086.

⁵Ibid.

Tertullian.--There are two passages in particular in the writings of Tertullian (flor. 197-220) which could possibly indicate dependence on James. In the first, Abraham is referred to as a "friend of God": Unde Abraham amicus Dei deputatus, si non de aequitate et justitia legis naturalis?¹ In the second there is a possible reference to Jas. 1:13: Caeterum absit, ut Dominus tentare videatur.² From these two references Meinertz³ argues for dependence, whereas T. Zahn's judgment is more sound: "It remains undecided whether Tertullian had seen the Epistle of James."⁴

2. The Eastern Church

The Didache.--The author (or authors) of The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles which probably dates in its present form in the first half of the second century, knew several New Testament books, especially Matthew, Luke, Romans, I Corinthians and I Peter, but there is no trace of a New Testament canon and a certain use of James cannot be ascertained. Some of the more interesting parallels are:⁵ οὐ διψυχῆτεῖς, πότεραν ἔσται ἢ οὐ (4:4); cf. Jas. 1:8 and 4:8 (δίψυχος (διψυχία,

¹Adversos Judaeos, II. Migne, Patrologiae Latinae, II, 638.

²De Oratione, VIII, Migne, P. L., I, 1266.

³Op. cit., pp. 96-99.

⁴Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons und der altkirchlichen Literatur (Erlangen: A. Deichert, 1881-1900), I, 325.

⁵For a complete list cf. Mayor, op. cit., p. lxxii.

διψυχέω) is a rare word).¹ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐξομολογήσῃ τὰ παραπτώματά σου (4:14); cf. Jas. 5:16. A. Meyer assigns these resemblances to the linguistic usage and metaphorical style of the church.²

Ignatius.--Ignatius (ob. cir. 115 A. D.), the first Bishop of Antioch, does not quote the Epistle of James. Mayor remarks "there is little general resemblance between the epistles of Ignatius and that of St. James,"³ but cites a few phrases which are at least similar. Meinertz⁴ adds to Mayor's list a statement from Ignatius' letter to the Ephesians, γέγραπται γὰρ Ὑπερηφάνοις ὁ θεὸς ἀντιτάσσεται⁵ and compares it with Jas. 4:6. Ignatius' statement, however, undoubtedly has Prov. 3:34 behind it, and it is very doubtful, as Meinertz suggests, that it was formulated under the influence of the statement in James.⁶

Theophilus.--This Bishop of Antioch (ob. cir. 185 A. D.) makes no direct use of the Epistle of James, although the statement: Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐὰν φῇς, Δείξόν μοι τὸν θεόν σου· καὶ γὰρ σοὶ εἶπομι ἄν, Δείξόν μοι τὸν ἄνθρωπόν σου, καὶ γὰρ σοὶ δεῖξω τὸν θεόν μου⁷,

¹Cf. above, p. 5, 6.

²Op. cit., p. 24.

³Op. cit., p. lxxiii.

⁴Op. cit., p. 63.

⁵Epistola ad Ephesios V. Migne, P. G., V, 649.

⁶Op. cit., p. 63.

⁷Ad Antiochum I, 1, 2. Migne, P. G., VI, 1025.

is somewhat reminiscent of Jas. 2:18: Δείξόν μοι τὴν πίστιν σου χωρὶς τῶν ἔργων, κἀγὼ δείξω σοι ἐκ τῶν ἔργων μου τὴν πίστιν μου.

Clement of Alexandria.--Clement of Alexandria's acquaintance with the Epistle of James too is doubtful. He certainly did not know it as Holy Scripture. Eusebius says:

Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ὑποτυπώσεσι, συνελόντα εἰπεῖν πάσης τὴν ἐνδιαθήκου γραφῆς ἐπιτετμημένας πεποίηται διηγήσεις, μηδὲ τὰς ἀντιλεγόμενας παρελθὼν, τὴν τοῦδα λέγω καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς καθολικάς, τὴν τὴν Βαρνάβα καὶ τὴν Πέτρου λεγομένην ἀποκάλυψιν.¹

Photius later corroborates the testimony of Eusebius. In referring to the Hypotyposes he says: ὁ δὲ ὅλος σκοπὸς ὥσανεὶ ἐρμηνεῖαι τυγχάνουσι τῆς Γενέσεως, τῆς Ἑξόδου, τῶν Ψαλμῶν, τοῦ Θεοῦ Παύλου τῶν ἐπιστολῶν, καὶ τῶν καθολικῶν, καὶ τοῦ Ἐκκλησιαστοῦ.²

Despite this testimony of Photius, the probability is that Clement did not discuss the Epistle of James in his Hypotyposes. Cassiodor of Calabria (ob. 570), who translated the Hypotyposes into Latin, did not translate any comments of Clement on the Epistle of James although he did translate some of his remarks on the Epistle of Jude. If comments on James had been in the original, Cassiodor, in all probability, would have translated them along with those on Jude. The so-called allus-

¹Historiae Ecclesiasticae VI, 14, 1.

²Bibliotheca Cod. CIX. Migne, P. G. CIII, 384.

ions to the Epistle of James have been discussed by A. Meyer.¹ They seem inconclusive even though we should expect the teacher of Origen to reveal some acquaintance with the Epistle.

B. From Origen to the Fifth Century

1. The Western Church

Hippolytus (ob. 236 or 237).--The first possible citation of the Epistle of James by a leader of the Western Church is in connection with an Arabic scholion on Hippolytus' commentary on Revelation. The citation is said to be from Jude,² but is in reality from James, and as A. Meyer has pointed out, is not the work of Hippolytus but that of the scholiast.³

Hippolytus' statement, ἡ γὰρ τῶν ἐν ὑπεροκῇ κειμένων δόξα φύλλοις ξηροῖς ἔοικεν, πρὸς ὀλίγον ἀκμάσαντα εὐθέως δὲ μαρανθέντα⁴ has at least a similar sentiment to Jas. 1:11; also compare Jas. 4:14 for πρὸς ὀλίγον. In the same commentary he writes, θλίψεως τῆς μεγάλης τῆς ἐπερχομένης τῷ κόσμῳ⁵ which has a close parallel in Jas. 5:1, ἐπὶ ταῖς ταλαιπωρίαις ὑμῶν ταῖς ἐπερχομέναις. One other passage shows

¹Op. cit., p. 49.

²The scholiast confuses Jude with James. Cf. Dibelius' discussion of this passage, Der Brief des Jakobus, op. cit., p. 32.

³Op. cit. p. 9.

⁴Εἰς τὸν Δανιῆλα, III, 6.

⁵Ibid., IV, 12.

similarity to the Epistle of James. In De Christo et Anti-christo he says of Christ:

ὡς ἔμπειρος ἰατρός, πρὸς τὰ ἡμῖν συμφέροντα
ἐπιστάμενος τὴν ἀνθρώπων ἀσθένειαν· καὶ τοὺς
μὲν ἀγνοοῦντας ἐκδιδάσκειν πειρᾶται· τοὺς δὲ
πλανωμένους ἐπιστρέφει εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀληθινὴν
δόξον.¹ Cf. Jas. 5:19, 20.

Whether these passages reveal acquaintance with the Epistle of James, it is difficult to prove. It should be mentioned, however, that the only three Catholic epistles which were included in Hippolytus' New Testament were I Peter and I and II John.

Hilary of Poitiers (ob. 366).--The oldest quotation of the Epistle of James in the West is by Hilary of Poitiers. While in exile in Asia Minor he wrote the treatise De Trinitate in which he cites the Epistle of James as follows: et Jacobus apostolus dixerit: Apud quem non est demutatio.² This quotation, however, does not really demonstrate the use of the Epistle in the West since Hilary here is showing how the Arians, in order to demonstrate the unchangeableness of God, quote Mal. 3:6 and Jas. 1:17.³

Ambrosiaster.--The next oldest citation in the West is by Ambrosiaster (flor. 375-385). This work which is attributed

¹XIV, Migne, P. G. X, 729, 732.

²IV, 8, Migne, P. L. X, 101.

³Cf. A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 9, "Wir haben hier ein Zeugnis über den Schriftgebrauch der Arianer im Orient, nicht über den der abendländischen Kirche, die den JB sonst nirgends nennt."

in manuscripts to Hilary, Ambrose and Augustine, and which was probably written by a converted Jew by the name of Isaac, cites the Epistle on Gal. 5:10: dicente Jacobo apostolo in epistola sua.¹

Lucifer of Cagliari (ob. 371).--When he went into exile in Sardinia, Lucifer of Cagliari took a New Testament with him which had all the Catholic epistles except James and II John. Ambrose (cir. 397), although he probably knew the Epistle, does not quote it.²

The beginning of recognition of the Epistle of James in the West is evidenced by the appearances of translations. The Latin translation (cir. 350) on which the Corbey MS, the pseudo-Augustinian Speculum and the Vulgate ultimately rest, was the first indication of this recognition. Augustine possessed a translation of the Epistle as did Priscillian (ob. 385) in Spain,³ and Chromatius of Aquileia (386-406), according to his two citations of the Epistle, used a special translation.⁴

¹Cf. Hort, op. cit., p. xxix. Also A. Souter, The Text and Canon of the New Testament (London: Duckworth, 1913), p. 197.

²"It is probable that the passage, Expos. evan. Luc. viii, 13 sive Lazarus pauper in saeculo sed deo dives, sive apostolicus aliquis pauper in verbo, locuples in fide betrays acquaintance with Jas. 2:5. The probability is increased by the agreement with the version of ff (pauper's saeculi, locupletes in fide) against the Vulgate (pauperes in hoc mundo, divites in fide)." Ropes, op. cit., p. 101.

³For this translation cf. J. B. Mayor, op. cit., p. 3 ff.

⁴In Tractatus in Evangelium S. Matthaei XIV, 7, Migne,

These translations of the Epistle indicate the increasing interest which was being aroused in the West, no doubt as the result of the influence of the Greek Church. But recognition came slowly. The Cheltenham or Mommsenian Canon,¹ an African canon (circa 360 A. D.), contains all our canonical books with the exceptions of James, Jude and Hebrews. The Epistle of James is included in the Damasine Canon (382 A. D.), but serious doubts have been raised as to the authenticity of this canon.² Jerome included the Epistle in the Vulgate and in the catalogue of books included in his epistle Ad Paulinum.³ In De Viris Illustribus, 2, he wrote:

Jacobus qui appellatur frater Domini . . . unam tantum scripsit epistolam, quae de septem Catholicis est, quae et ipsa ab alio quodam sub nomine ejus edita asseritur, licet paulatim tempore procedente obtinuerit auctoritatem.⁴

P. L. XX, 362: Beatus qui sustinuerit tentationem, quoniam beatus factus accipiet coronam vitae, quam promisit Deus iis qui eum diligunt (Jas. 1:12), and IX, 1, Migne, P. L. XX, p. 349: Concupiscentia, inquit, parit peccatum, peccati autem concupiscentia acquirit mortem (Jas. 1:15).

¹Text in Souter, op. cit., pp. 212, 213.

²Cf. Souter, op. cit., p. 218: "The publication of Professor Ernst von Dobschütz's Das Decretum Gelasianum de Libris Recipiendis et Non Recipiendis (Leipzig, 1912), . . . has shown that the so-called Damasine decree . . . is unauthentic, and is really an extract from the so-called Decretum Gelasianum, a production of the sixth century.

³For the text see Souter, ibid. p. 220.

⁴Migne, P. L. XXIII, 639.

Augustine.--Augustine¹ follows the canon of Jerome and undoubtedly wielded great influence in the formation of the Canon of the third Council of Carthage (397 A. D.)² which included the Epistle of James. It is found in the canon of Rufinus, presbyter of Aquileia (cir. 407 A. D.),³ and in the list of books included in a letter written by Pope Innocent to Exsuperius of Toulouse (405 A. D.).⁴ From this point (beginning of fifth century) on the Epistle of James is solidly established in the canon of the Western Church.

2. The Eastern Church

a. The Syrian Church

In the Syrian church about the year 400 only the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul were accepted as Scripture. In the Doctrine of Addai (last half of 4th century) the Epistle of James along with the rest of the Catholic Epistles is excluded from being read in the church: "The Law and the Prophets and the Gospel . . . and the Epistles of Paul . . . and the Acts of the twelve apostles . . . these books read ye in the church of God, and with these read not others."⁵ A confirmation of

¹Cf. his list of New Testament books in De Doctrina Christiana 2, 12.

²For text of Souter, op. cit., pp. 220, 221.

³Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum, 36. Cf. Souter, ibid., p. 222.

⁴For text cf. Souter, ibid., p. 227.

⁵Quoted in Souter, op. cit., pp. 225, 226.

the Doctrine of Addai is to be found in a Syriac Canon¹ of about 400 A. D. Here too, all the Catholic Epistles and the Book of Revelation are excluded. There is no reference to any Catholic Epistle in Aphraates or the genuine works of St. Ephraim, both fourth-century Syriac authors.² Julianus Sabha³ uses phraseology reminiscent of the Epistle of James, but it is difficult to demonstrate dependence. A. Meyer's conclusion is worth noting:

The field is too great to give a final judgment; however, it is not advisable to admit that this important Syrian used or had knowledge of the Epistle of James; perhaps one might suggest that he had heard individual sayings from the Epistle of James, since the need of a close bond with Greek orthodoxy must have made Greek influence available to him despite the difference of linguistic tradition.⁴

In the fifth century the famous Syriac translation of the New Testament, the Peshitta, came into existence. Ordered by Rabbula, Bishop of Edessa (411-435 A. D.), it was not a fresh translation but a revision of the Old-Syriac version made by comparing the Old-Syriac with a Greek text in vogue in Constantinople.⁵ Changes were made usually in the direction

¹Text in T. Zahn, Grundriss der Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons 2d ed; (Leipzig: A. Dieckert, 1904), p. 86.

²Ibid., p. 226.

³Cf. A. Meyer, op. cit., pp. 21, 22.

⁴Ibid. p. 21.

⁵It is interesting to note that Lucian's recension of the New Testament had influenced the Canon of Antioch by way of Constantinople. The old Antiochian School had not excluded

of the Greek MS. Although the Peshitta did not contain II or III John, II Peter, Jude or Revelation, it did contain the Epistle of James.¹

The Greek-speaking section of the Syrian Church undoubtedly caused James, I Peter and I John to be included in the Peshitta. This influence came to Rabbula through his friend John of Antioch and the latter, along with the rest of the Antiochians, was influenced by John Chrysostom (ob. 407).

Chrysostom held the author of the Epistle to be the brother of the Lord² and although he did not consider James to be one of the apostles,³ he was the teacher of Jerusalem,⁴ the bishop of Jerusalem and a great and wonderful person.⁵ This portrait of James reveals the obvious influence of Euse-

the Book of Revelation and apparently not II Peter. Under Lucian's influence the Antioch Canon of the fourth century excluded II Peter, II and III John, Jude and Revelation.

¹Hort, op. cit., p. xxviii, thought that the Epistle of James was contained in the Old-Syriac and thus was not first inserted into the Syriac New Testament with the Peshitta, but "the early history of the Egyptian versions is too uncertain to show anything."

²De Poenitentia Homilia IX, Migne, P. G. XLIX, 343 f.

³In Epist. Corinthios Hom. XXI, Migne, P. G. LXI, 169 ff.

⁴πρὸ τοῦ γὰρ εἰσεῖν τινὰς ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου (αὐτὸς γὰρ ἦν ὁ διδάσκαλος ἐν Ἱερουσαλὺμοις.) Commentarius in Epist. ad Galatas (on 2:9), Migne, P. G. LXI, 641.

⁵οὗτος ὁ ἀδελφὸς ἦν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἐπίσκοπος τῶν Ἱερουσαλὺμων, ἀνὴρ μέγας καὶ θαυμαστός. In Acta Apostolorum Homilia XLVI, Migne, P. G. LX, 321.

bis which was to be expected considering the close proximity of Caesarea to Antioch. Meinertz¹ has listed allusions of Chrysostom to the Catholic Epistles. No homilies, however, on these epistles were written by him. A Synopsis of Scripture² which, although probably not written by Chrysostom, at least represents his views includes three Catholic Epistles: καὶ τῶν καθολικῶν ἐπιστολαὶ τρεῖς. James, I Peter and I John apparently were already recognized as canonical.

Chrysostom's influence was felt by Severianus of Gabula, Polychronius, Theodoret of Cyrus, Amphilochius of Iconium and Isidor of Pelusium.

It is not to be assumed that the entire Greek speaking wing of the Syrian Church followed Chrysostom. In Eastern Syria the recognition came more slowly. Theodore of Mopsuestia (ob. cir. 428) rejected all of the Catholic Epistles, and some of the Nestorians in later times, although accepting the Peshitta, did not accept the Epistle of James.³ Indeed, doubts concerning the Epistle of James as well as the other Catholic Epistles were carried down almost to modern times.

¹Op. cit., p. 167.

²Cf. T. Zahn, Geschichte des Kanons, II, 230.

³J. Ropes, op. cit., p. 97.

b. The Greek Church

(1) Alexandria

Origen (ob. circ. 255) is the first to cite the Epistle as Scripture¹ and to name the author as James. In his Comment. in Joan. XIX, 23 he writes, εὖ γὰρ λέγεται μὲν πίστις, χωρὶς δὲ ἔργων τυγχάνη, νεκρά ἐστὶν ἡ τοιαύτη, ὡς ἐν τῇ Φερομένῃ Ἰακώβου ἐπιστολῇ ἀνέγνωμεν. The precise meaning of Φερομένη in this passage has been much discussed. A. Meyer says, "Dies Φερομένη heisst nun freilich nicht 'falschlich so genannt'--aber auch nicht: 'allgemein anerkannt,' sondern, . . . 'unter diesem Namen bekannt,' 'im Umlauf befindlich' . . ."² Ropes takes Φερομένη to mean "current" and suggests:

The positive evidence that Origen counted James as a "disputed" book, and had scruples about including it in his N. T. seems to reduce itself to an over-hasty inference from Comm. in Joh. XX, 10 οὐ συγ-χωρηθέν ἂν ὑπὸ τῶν παραδεχομένων τὸ πίστις χωρὶς ἔργων νεκρά ἐστὶν, where the context shows that there is no implication whatever that any class of recognized Christians deliberately rejected James.³

Origen included the Epistle of James among the Biblical writings. In his Homilies on Genesis XII, 2⁴ and his Homilies

¹For the formulas used by Origen in citing the Epistle of James see Dibelius, op. cit., p. 52 and Ropes, op. cit., p. 94.

²A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 39.

³Op. cit., pp. 93, 94.

⁴Pueri sunt Isaac, Matthaeus, Marcus, Lucas et Joannes. Pueri ejus sunt Petrus, Jacobus et Judas; puer ejus est et apostolus Paulus, qui omnes Novi Testamenti puteos fodiunt. Migne, P. G. XII, 232.

on Joshua VII, 1,¹ which are preserved for us in Latin by Rufinus, he includes James along with Peter and Jude among the authors of the books of the New Testament.

Why Origen in his Commentary on Matthew (X, 14), where he speaks at length of the Lord's brothers, fails to mention anything about his Epistle, it is difficult to say, especially since he mentions the Epistle of Jude. The probable explanation is that he believed that the Epistle was written by another James, not the Lord's brother.²

A further indication of the existence of the Epistle in the third century in Egypt is to be found in a Greek papyrus³ which contains part of the Epistle of James. Also the exegetical works of the Alexandrians of the fourth and fifth centuries and the Egyptian translations of the same period are further evidences that the Epistle was in circulation there and read.

¹Sacerdotali tuba primus in Evangelio suo Matthaeus increpuit. Marcus quoque, Lucas et Joannes suis singulis tubis sacerdotalibus cecinerunt. Petrus etiam duabus Epistolarum suarum personat tubis. Jacobus quoque et Judas. Addit nihilominus adhuc et Joannes tuba canere per Epistolas suas et Apocalypsim, et Lucas apostolarum gesta describens. Migne, P. G. XII, 857.

²Origen seems to assign the authorship of the Epistle to the Lord's brother in his Commentary on Romans which he wrote before his Commentary on Matthew. But the former is preserved for us in the Latin translation of Rufinus who made such additions and thus the statement there is probably unreliable. Cf. A. Meyer, op. cit., pp. 40, 41.

³p 20 (a 1019), Princeton, Oxyrynchus Papyri 1171. Contains Jas. 2:19-3:9.

By this time, apparently, it was being received into the Egyptian canon. The Catalogus Claramontanus,¹ a list which was probably composed in Alexandria at the beginning of the fourth century, contains the Epistle as does the Easter Letter (367) of Athanasius,² and the author is called an apostle by Cyril of Alexandria (ob. 444) and in the homilies of the so-called Eusebius of Alexandria (5th or 6th century).³

(2) Palestine

Hegesippus (ob. cir. 180), whose account of the martyrdom of James is preserved by Eusebius,⁴ makes no mention of the Epistle of James. The Epistle must have been unknown to Hegesippus for, had he expressed some opinion on the Epistle, it certainly would have been reported by Eusebius, whose interest in the canon is clearly reflected in his writings. So far as Hegesippus was concerned, the canon consisted only of the Old Testament (the law and the prophets) and the Lord, i. e., the Gospels.⁵

¹For text cf. Souter, op. cit., p. 211.

²Text in T. Zahn, Grundriss, op. cit., pp. 86-92.

³A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 49.

⁴Hist. Eccl., II, 23.

⁵Ibid., IV, 22, 3: ἐν ἐκάστη δὲ διαδοχῇ καὶ ἐν ἐκάτῃ πόλει οὕτως ἔχει ὡς ὁ νόμος κηρύσσει καὶ οἱ προφῆται καὶ ὁ κύριος.

The martyr Pamphilus (ob. 309) and his pupil, Eusebius (ob. cir. 339), reflect the influence of Origen. Pamphilus was educated at Alexandria and when he moved to Caesarea brought with him a magnificent library of biblical and patristic writings, the main part of which consisted of the voluminous works of Origen. Eusebius had complete access to this library and accepted the pronouncements of Origen on the Epistle of James.

Eusebius asserts that the Epistles of James and Jude were read in most of the churches despite the fact that their authenticity was denied on the grounds that few of the ancients quoted them.¹ He recognizes seven Catholic epistles, the Epistle of James heading the list,² and reports the tradition that the author was the brother of the Lord.³ A. Meyer has pointed out that Eusebius is the first to report the tradition that the author was the Lord's brother, but he himself went only as far as to name the author ὁ ἱερὸς ἀπόστολος.⁴

¹Ibid. II, 23, 25: τοιαῦτα καὶ τὰ κατὰ Ἰάκωβον, οἷ ἡ πρώτη τῶν ὀνομαζομένων καθολικῶν ἐπιστολῶν εἶναι λέγεται. ἰστέον δὲ ὡς νοθεύεται μὲν, (οὐ πολλοὶ γοῦν τῶν παλαιῶν αὐτῆς ἐμνημόνευσαν, ὡς οὐδὲ τῆς λεγομένης Πούδα, μιᾶς καὶ αὐτῆς οὔσης τῶν ἑπτὰ λεγομένων καθολικῶν) ὅμως δὲ ἴσμεν καὶ ταύτας μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν ἐν πλείστοις δεδημοσιευμένας ἐκκλησίᾳς Cf. III, 25, 3, 6.

²Ibid., II, 23, 25.

³Ibid., where λέγεται is used and in III, 25, 3, where he uses λεγομένη.

⁴A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 32.

In the pseudo-Clementine tractate De Virginitate,
I, 11, 4,

Neque attendunt (scil. multi) ad id, quod dicit
[Scriptura]: ne multi inter vos sint doctores,
fratres, neque omnes sitis prophetae. Qui in
verbis suis non praevaricatur, hic homo perfec-
tus est, potens domare et subigere totum corpus
suum,

Dibelius finds the earliest "einwandfreie" citation of the
Epistle of James (3:1f.).¹ This tractate stems from southern
Syria or Palestine during the third century.

Cyril, the young presbyter of Jerusalem (cir. 348),
Epiphanius of Salamis (cir. 375) and Hesychius of Jerusalem
follow Eusebius' pronouncements on the canon.

(3) Asia Minor

In Asia Minor the canon of Alexandria and Caesarea
was accepted by Gregory of Nazianzus (ob. cir. 390) and his
friend Basilus. Since both Gregory and Basilus had a great
interest in the writings of Origen their reception of the
Alexandrian canon is not surprising. Gregory² put the canon
to verse and included all seven of the Catholic Epistles in
the order: James, I and II Peter, I, II, and III John, Jude.

What is perhaps the oldest conciliar pronouncement on
the canon of Scripture arose during this period in Asia Minor:

¹Op. cit., p. 51.

²Text in Zahn, Geschichte des Kanons, op. cit., II,
216 f.

the 59th Canon of the Council of Laodicea¹ (363). The Epistle of James is listed here at the head of the Catholic Epistles, and although this list of books may be a later accretion, it probably expresses a good Asia Minor tradition.²

Gregory Thaumaturgus (ob. cir. 270), and Methodius of Olympus (ob. cir. 311), both show acquaintance with the Epistle of James.

C. Subsequent History

1. The Reformation

Little need be said concerning the fate of the Epistle of James during the Middle Ages.³ After the early part of the fifth century its place in the canon of Scripture was scarcely questioned. One novel opinion concerning the author of the Epistle was put forth during this period by Isidore of Seville, the great Spanish Church leader (636). He said of the author of the Epistle: Iacobus, filius Zebedaei, frater Joannis, quartus in ordine, duodecim tribubus, quae sunt in dispersione

¹Text of the Laodicean Canon LIX in Souter, op. cit., pp. 195, 196.

²B. F. Westcott, A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament (5th ed.; London; Macmillan, 1881), pp. 431-439. Westcott's opinion is that the catalogue of books is not an authentic part of the Laodicean Canons but an early addition to it.

³For a complete account of the history of the Epistle of James during this period cf. M. Meinertz, op. cit., p. 203 ff.

gentium, scripsit.¹ Isidore was undoubtedly influenced by national motives, since a legend relates that James, the son of Zebedee, laboured in Spain.

With the Reformation came a resurgence of biblical study and fresh criticism of the Epistle of James. Erasmus of Rotterdam (1467-1536) doubted, on stylistic grounds, that James, the Lord's brother, wrote the Epistle. At the end of his Commentary on James he says: Nec enim referre videtur usquequaque majestatem illam et gravitatem apostolicam. Nec hebraismi tantum quantum a Iacobi qui fuerit episcopus Hierosolymitanus expectaretur.²

Martin Luther's pronouncements on the Epistle of James are well known. His chief objections to the Epistle were not so much based on critical doubts as on dogmatic ones.³ Apparently from the first Luther tried to reconcile the Epistle of

¹De Ortu et Abitu Patrum LXXI, Migne P. L. LXXXIII, 151. It is interesting to note that Dante also ascribed the Epistle to the son of Zebedee. Cf. Paradiso XXV, 13-18, 29-33, 76-78, 94 f.

²Novum Test. Annotationes (Basel, 1519), p. 523, quoted in Dibelius, op. cit., p. 54. Cf. also Westcott, op. cit., pp. 471, 472.

³"If one wants to preach the gospel, it must in short, be on the resurrection of Christ. He who does not do that is no apostle; for this is the main part of the gospel. And those are the right, noblest books, which teach and impress this, as stated above. Hence one can well feel that the Epistle of James is no right apostolic epistle, for there is hardly a thing of this in it." M. Luther's sämtliche Werke, ed. J. G. Plochmann and J. K. Irmischer (Erlangen, 1826-68) LI, 337. Spitta says Luther rejected the Epistle on the basis of intuition! Der Brief des Jakobus, op. cit., p. 239.

James to his doctrine of justification by faith.¹ He first expressed doubts in 1519 at Leipzig when Eck put before him James' teaching on justification,² and in his Vorrede auf das Neue Testament he remarks:

Summa, St. Johannis Evangelium und seine erste Epistel, St. Pauli Episteln, sonderlich die zu die Römern, Galatern, Ephesern, und St. Peters erste Epistel, das sind die Bücher, die dir Christum zeigen, und alles lehren, das dir zu wissen noth und selig ist, ob du schon kein ander Buch noch Lehre nimmer sehest noch hörst. Darum ist St. Jakobs Epistel eine recht stroherne Epistel gegen sie, denn sie doch keine evangelische Art an ihr hat.³

¹This attempt seems evident in his comments on Gal. 5:6: "That is to say, faith which is not feigned nor hypocritical, but true and lively. This is that faith which exerciseth and requireth good works through love. It is as much as to say, he that will be a true Christian indeed, or one of Christ's kingdom, must be a true believer. Now he believeth not truly, if works of charity follow not his faith. So on both hands, as well on the right hand as on the left, he shutteth hypocrites out of Christ's kingdom. On the left hand, he shutteth out the Jews, and all such as will work their own salvation, saying, 'In Christ neither circumcision,' that is to say, no works, no service, no worshipping, no kind of life in the world, but faith, without any trust in works or merits, availeth before God. On the right hand, he shutteth out all slothful and idle persons, which say, if faith justify without works, then let us work nothing, but let us only believe and do what we list." Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, trans. Erasmus Middleton (London: William Tegg and Co., 1875).

²Resolutiones Lutherianae super propositionibus suis Lipsiae disputatis in Dr. Martin Luther's Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe, ed. J. K. F. Knaake, G. Kawerau (Weimar: 1883 etc.), II, 425.

³Dr. Martin Luthers Sämmtliche Schriften, ed. J. G. Walch (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1880-1904), XIV, 91. I have retained the German here since this is undoubtedly Luther's most well known pronouncement on the Epistle.

One of the strongest statements Luther made concerning the Epistle of James was in connection with its authorship.

But this James does no more than drive to the law and its works, and in a disorderly fashion throw one thing into another so that, it seems to me, it was some good pious man or other who took up several statements from the disciples of the apostles and so threw them on paper, or perhaps it was composed by another from his sermon.¹

Luther's statement here indicated that, although he considered the author of the Epistle a "good pious man," the Epistle is, so far as he is concerned, a jumble of words from a third or perhaps even a fourth hand. When Luther's German translation of the New Testament appeared in 1522, James, Jude, Hebrews and Revelation were placed at the back of the volume and were not given numbers in the table of contents.

In 1552 the extreme was reached when the Wuttemberg Confession declared: *Sacram scripturam vocamus eos canonicos libros Veteris et Novi Testamente de quorum auctoritate in ecclesia numquam dubitatum est.*

Luther's opinion held almost complete sway among the reformers. Melanchthon (ob. 1560) tried to mediate in the dispute over the Epistle by interpreting *δικαιοῦσθαι* differently in James and Paul, but his attempts did not much impress Luther.² Bugenhagen, Andreas, Althamer and Lukas Osiander

¹Sammtliche Werke, Erlangen ed; op. cit., LXIII, 157.

²Meinertz, op. cit., p. 222, quotes one of Luther's remarks on Melanchthon's attempts. "Sunt enim contraria: fides iustificat et fides non iustificat. Wer die die tzusammenreimen

along with Musculus accepted Luther's pronouncements and in some cases even went beyond him.¹

Towards the end of the sixteenth century doubts concerning the canonical character of the Epistle of James disappeared, and were generally not revived among the Lutherans until the nineteenth century. However, the Epistle is still referred to by Lutherans as deuter^e-canonical. R. H. C. Lenski says that this term is applied

. . . in order to register these facts [i. e. that doubts and questions were raised in the past concerning its canonicity] and not to cast aspersion upon the genuineness and the usefulness of the epistle. "Canon" means measuring rod. The Church uses the deuterocanonical books as a measuring rod but regards them as "deutero," secondary, because it has rods that are "proto," which have become such because of their continued use in the Church.²

A word here is in order concerning Catholic opinion during the Reformation. Although generally Catholic scholars supported the authenticity of the Epistle of James, Erasmus' influence was felt, since he was the leader of both the critical and literary schools of the period. The Dominican

kann, dem wil ich mein paret aufsetzen und wil mich einem narren schellten lassen. D. M. Lutheri Colloquia; ed. Binseil II, Lemgoviae et Detmoldiae 1864, 222."

¹Mention should be made here of Carlstadt who was a notable exception. Although he placed the Epistle of James in the third class of the books of Scripture, he did recognize its canonical character.

²The Interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Epistle of James (Columbus: Wartburg Press, 1937), p. 514.

Cardinal Cajetan, for example, confessed quite frankly his doubts as to the genuineness and canonicity of the Epistle of James along with Hebrews, II Peter, II and III John and Jude. The decree of the Council of Trent (1546), however, settled the matter for Catholic scholars. The Epistle of James was officially declared canonical and its author was declared to be an apostle.

Outside of Germany there was no opposition to the Epistle of James. Although Zwingli did not consider the Book of Revelation part of the Bible, he expressed no doubts concerning the Epistle of James. Calvin accepted it as canonical. He wrote in the preface to his Commentary on the Epistle of James, written in 1551,

It appears from the writings of Jerome and Eusebius, that this Epistle was not formerly received by many Churches without opposition. There are also at this day some who do not think it entitled to authority. I, however, am inclined to receive it without controversy, because I see no just cause for rejecting it.¹

Calvin was not so confident about the author of the Epistle:

But as to the author, there is somewhat more reason for doubting. . . . The ancients are nearly unanimous in thinking that he was one of the disciples named Oblias and a relative of Christ, who was set over the Church at Jerusalem. . . . I am . . . rather inclined to the conjecture, that he of whom Paul speaks was the son of Alphaeus. I do not yet deny that another was the ruler of the Church at

¹Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles, trans. Owen (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1948), p. 276.

Jerusalem, and one indeed from the college of the disciples; . . . But whether of the two was the writer of the Epistle, it is not for me to say.¹

Tyndale's translation of the New Testament included the Epistle of James but, as in Luther's translation, it was placed at the end, without number, along with the Epistle to the Hebrews, Jude and Revelation. He mentions in his prologue to James the former doubts, but for him it is Holy Scripture.² Luther's order of books continued to influence the English versions until the publication of the Great Bible in 1539 which followed the order of New Testament books found in the Vulgate.

2. Modern Criticism

(Nineteenth century³ to the present time)

After the beginning of the seventeenth century the doubts as to the canonical character of the Epistle of James largely disappear. The next stage in the history of the Epistle in the church begins in the nineteenth century with the publication of de Wette's Lehrbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in die kanonischen Bücher des Neutestament, published in Berlin by Reimer in 1826. De Wette's chief arguments

¹Ibid., p. 277.

²Westcott, op. cit., p. 497.

³For 19th century German criticism cf. J. E. Huther, (Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the General Epistles of Peter, John and Jude, ed. H. A. W. Meyer; trans. from 3d ed; New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1887), pp. 24-30.

against the traditional authorship were: the brother of the Lord could not have written such fluent Greek; he would have no reason to write a letter to all the Jewish Christians; and he would not attack the teaching of Paul. The first argument above is still regarded as one of the chief difficulties facing those who accept the traditional view.

The contribution of Heinrich Schott¹ represents another step in the development of the criticism of the Epistle in the nineteenth century. The good Greek of the Epistle created a serious problem for him as it did for de Wette before him. His solution is that the author is a Hellenistic Christian who is not mentioned in the New Testament, and suggests the possibility that the letter was composed in Aramaic and then translated into Greek by a Hellenist.² Since his time several others have held this view.³

F. C. Baur and the Tübingen school pursued another approach to the Epistle. The Epistle, according to Baur, was

¹H. Schott, Isagoge Historico Critica (Ienae: C. H. Walzii, 1830).

²Actually this theory was not original with Schott. According to J. E. Huther, op. cit., p. 23, the Aramaic-origin theory had been previously suggested by Faber, 1770, Bollen, Schmidt, 1818, and Bertholdt, 1819.

³Notably J. Wordsworth, Studia Biblica I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), p. 142 ff. and F. C. Burkitt, Christian Beginnings (London: University of London Press, 1924), pp. 65-71.

written after the Apostle Paul's time and (in keeping with Baur's general theory) has a direct anti-Paul tendency.¹ Schwegler shared his teacher's views.² For him the lack of external witness was decisive against the traditional authorship.³ He finds a mild form of Ebionitism in the Epistle which was not present in apostolic times and concludes that the Epistle was the product of the Jewish Christian Church of the second century.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century the German scholars Holtzmann, Jülicher, Harnack and Zahn all made significant contributions to the historical criticism of the Epistle of James as did the English scholar J. B. Mayor, but the most significant step in the criticism of the Epistle came as the result of the work of F. Spitta⁴ and L. Massebieau.⁵ Their conclusion, arrived at independently, was that the Epistle is a Jewish document Christianized by the interpolation

¹Paulus, der Apostel Jesu Christi (Stuttgart: Becher & Miller, 1845), II, 322 ff.

²Das nachapostolische Zeitalter in den Hauptmomenten seiner Entwicklung (Tübingen: L. Fues, 1846), I, 413 ff.

³Ibid., p. 416.

⁴Zur Geschichte und Litteratur des Urchristentums (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1896), Vol. II. This work was also published separately under the title, Der Brief des Jakobus.

⁵"L'Épître de Jacques est-elle l'œuvre d'un Chrétien?," Revue de l'histoire des religions, XXXII (1895), 249 ff.

of the words Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in 1:1¹ and $\text{ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ}$ in 2:1. Although this hypothesis has failed to gain the general support of scholars,² it has done much to emphasize the fact that the writer of the Epistle was intimately acquainted with the Old Testament Scriptures and the Wisdom literature of the Jews of the Dispersion.

A flood of literature on the Epistle of James appeared shortly after the turn of the century. Commentaries were written by R. J. Knowling, F. J. A. Hort (appeared posthumously), H. Windisch and M. Meinertz to mention but a few. In 1916 J. H. Ropes' work in the International Critical Commentary series appeared and added much to our understanding of the literary character of the Epistle of James. Dibelius, whose commentary in the new Meyer's series was published in 1921, also afforded help along these lines. Other works on the Epistle have appeared since Dibelius' time³ but perhaps the most important is A. Meyer's Das Rätsel des Jakobusbriefes.

¹Spitta includes καὶ κυρίου as part of the interpolation in this verse.

²J. Halevy, "Lettre d'un rabbin de Palestine égarée dans l'Évangile," Revue Semitique, XXII (1914), 197-201, and A. Meyer, op. cit., both accept the Spitta-Massabieau hypothesis, as does K. Kohler, "General Epistle of James," Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1906), VII, 68-70, but they are the exceptions. For criticism of the Spitta-Massebieau theory see Mayor, op. cit., pp. cxciccv, W. Patrick, James the Lord's Brother (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906), pp. 337-343, and T. Zahn, Introduction I, 149-151.

³F. Hauck, Der Brief des Jakobus, (Band XVI Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, hrsg. von Th. Zahn; Leipzig; A. Deichert,

This original investigation which appeared in 1930 was built on the hypothesis of Spitta and Massebieau. The Epistle of James is a Jewish document but of a special type; it is an allegorical treatise which makes use of the more-or-less stereotyped allegorical interpretations of the names of Scripture in order to present an edifying message. Jakobus is Jacob, and he writes a letter to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion through their eponymous founders. The names of the characters in the story of Jacob are played upon throughout the Epistle. For example: "Simeon" is derived from the Hebrew word "to hear." James 1:19-24, then, with its recurrent reference to "hearing" and "hearers," is playing upon the name Simeon. Meyer explains the coupling of the idea of anger with hearing in 1:19 by reference to Genesis 49:5-7 where the account is given of the murderous anger of Simeon and Levi. In like fashion Dan is associated with "judgment," Asher with "riches," etc. In addition to Jacob, Simeon, Dan and Asher, Meyer finds in the Epistle Reuben, Levi, Judah, Naphtali, Gad, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Isaac, Rebekah, Bethuel, Laban, Esau, Leah, Rachel and even Jacob's struggle at the Jabbok! Also, each tribe appears in its proper order in the Epistle.

1926); J. Chaine, L'Épître de Saint Jacques (Paris: J. Gabalda et Fils, 1927); J. Moffatt, The General Epistles, James, Peter and Jude (The Moffatt New Testament Commentary, ed. James Moffatt; Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1928); J. Marty, L'Épître de Jacques, Etude critique (Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan, 1935); G. H. Rendall, op. cit.

The Christian editor, according to Meyer, did his work between 80-90 A. D. and the Jewish "Grundschrift" dates back to the time of Philo.

It is interesting to note that at least two scholars, one Protestant and one Catholic, have subscribed, more or less, to Meyer's thesis. Windisch, to a considerable extent, approved and adopted it in the second edition of his commentary on the Catholic Epistles in Lietzman's Handbuch zum Neuen Testament.¹ The Roman Catholic scholar G. Hartmann has developed a Christian variation to Meyer's theory. According to him, the Epistle is an allegory but does not have a Jewish base, rather a Christian one, and was written by the Apostle James or the brother of the Lord.²

No significant full-fledged commentary on the Epistle of James has appeared since the 1930's. However, interest still is evident in the Epistle as reflected by the special studies which have appeared in the past twelve years and the articles in theological journals.

Hermann Schramberger³ has attempted to revive the theory

¹Die Katholischen Briefe (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, hrsg. von H. Lietzman; 2 Auf.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1930). A third edition of this commentary appeared in 1951.

²"Der Aufbau des Jakobusbriefes," Zeitschrift für katholischen Theologie, LXVI (1942).

³Die Einheitlichkeit des Jakobusbriefes im antignostischen Kampf (Gotha: Klotz, 1936).

of the nineteenth century Tübingen scholars A. Schweigler, H. Weinels and O. Pfleiderer. He finds in the Epistle of James a refutation of Gnosticism, and he attempts to demonstrate the unity of the Epistle on the basis of this approach.

G. Kittel's article,¹ "Der geschichtliche Ort des Jakobusbriefes" defends the thesis

that the Epistle of James is the oldest of our extant Christian writings, that it had its place within the Palestinian primitive church and was written by the Lord's brother, that it belongs to the time before the apostolic council and immediately before the first missionary journey, -about the middle of the fourth decade.²

A small but rewarding book by A. T. Cadoux³ appeared in 1944 and developed the thesis already suggested by J. H. Moulton⁴ that the Epistle was addressed primarily to non-Christian Jews in the interest of the spread of the Gospel among them. The Epistle accomplishes this purpose by subtle suggestion.

The most promising method for such a letter would be not by frontal attack, but by suggestion and provocation of thought, by appeal to the best of what they already had. The aim of the letter is not to present the claims of Christ, nor to give

¹Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, XLI (1942), 71-105.

²Ibid., p. 71.

³The Thought of St. James (London: James Clarke & Co., 1944).

⁴"James" (A Commentary on the Bible, ed. A. S. Peake; London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, Ltd., 1919), p. 903.

information about Him. It is to remove objections and to create interest by showing the effect of this faith on conduct and personality.¹

The late W. L. Knox in an erudite and somewhat baffling article² suggests that the Epistle is a highly composite work made up of three addresses in the diatribe form (2:1-13; 2:14-26; 4:1-10) not necessarily from the same author, detached moral and religious maxims and a hebraic document (1:2-4, 9-12, 19-20, 26-27 and 3:13) with a Hellenistic commentary (1:5-8, 13-18, 21-25, and 3:1-12). Knox further suggests that

. . . the high authority which the [hebraic] text must have possessed may be due to its having been an utterance of James the Lord's brother. It is possible that parts of chs. 4 and 5 come from him; in general the whole epistle looks to me very much like a collection of Genizah fragments from the church of Pella or even of Jerusalem.³

Hans Joachim Schoeps in his monumental work, Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums,⁴ devotes a chapter to the Epistle of James. For him the Epistle is a late Jewish-Christian document. It has nothing to do with James, the brother of the Lord, or with apostolic times. It is rather a document of "antignostischen Kampfes" in the catholic church in the first half of the second century. The author is a "grosskirchlicher Judenchrist" who,

¹Gadoux, op. cit., p. 44.

²"The Epistle of James," Journal of Theological Studies, XLVI (1945), pp. 10-17.

³Ibid., p. 17.

⁴(Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1949), pp. 341-349.

in paranetischer Form an seine heidenchristlichen Brüder, die aus der paulinischen Rechtfertigungs- predigt Konsequenzen in Sinne der *ἀνομία* ziehen, einen stark jüdisch-moralisch gefärbten Ermahnungs- brief geschrieben hat.¹

Schoeps rejects the Tübingen theory that the Epistle is an Ebionite document and leans towards the pseudonymous theory with regards authorship.

Werner Bieder, in an inaugural lecture at Basal University,² brings the Epistle into the current stream of theological interest and debate. James addresses himself to Christians who are in danger of losing themselves to the world and thus also their existential Christianity (*Christliche Existenz*) through a mere theoretical and intellectual concept of faith. The Epistle is basically a refutation of faith as intellectual assent. Those who possess this kind of faith are only hearers of the Word and do not realize the personal implications and responsibilities that are part of existential Christianity. It is this fictitious faith which is the cause of disruptive theological disputations. So James is calling his hearers back from formal, dead, non-working, pure intellectual faith to Christian Existenz.

C. H. Powell's article in the *Expository Times*³ dis-

¹Ibid., p. 341.

²This lecture was published under the title "Christliche Existenz nach dem Zeugnis des Jakobusbriefes," Theologische Zeitschrift, V (1949), 93-113.

³"'Faith' in James and its Bearings on the Problem of the Date of the Epistle," Expository Times, LXII (1951), 311-314.

cusses the concept of faith in the Epistle as it bears upon the problem of the date. There are really two strains regarding faith in the Epistle, intellectual and dynamic. Now James separates these two elements whereas Paul combines them. In the Synoptic Gospels, faith has the dynamic aspect. For Christ faith meant access to the divine power. This is how James understands faith in 1:5, 6 and 5:15. The Epistle provides a bridge between the concept of faith in the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament. Powell favors an early date and James, the brother of the Lord, as author.

Further indication of renewed interest in the Epistle is evidenced by two recent more-or-less popular articles on the Epistle.¹ Current opinion, however, is probably best discovered by an inquiry into the treatment given to the Epistle in the seemingly unending stream of Introductions which make their appearance every few months. In these there is a general agreement as to the value of the Epistle. All concur that its high ethical and moral teachings have rightfully earned for it a place in Holy Writ.² But agreement ceases

¹F. J. Yetter, "A Right Strawy Epistle," Religion in Life, XX (1951), 416-424 and R. Henderlite, "The Epistle of James," Interpretation, III (1949), 460-476, an excellent general article.

²E. F. Scott's pronouncement is typical: "No one that reads it with an open mind can fail to see in it a noble and inspiring book, perhaps the finest of its kind ever written." The Varieties of New Testament Religion (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), p. 206.

here. There are those who still hold the traditional view. James, the Lord's brother, is the author and the Epistle is fairly early.¹ But the rejection of the traditional view is more frequent. Many of the old objections are still being raised: the good Greek of the Epistle; so few references to Christ; the apathy of the readers who must be past the first stages of their Christian experience,--etc. Those rejecting the traditional view bifurcate into two theories concerning authorship: (1) The author is a pseudonymous James² who wrote sometime after the death of the Lord's brother;³ (2) He is simply an "unknown James,"⁴ a teacher concerning whom no record has survived, and "who (understandably enough) was later identified with the Lord's brother."⁵

¹H. C. Thiessen, Introduction to the New Testament (2d ed.; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1944), p. 274; R. Heard, An Introduction to the New Testament (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1950), pp. 164, 165; P. Feine, Einleitung in das neue Testament (9th Aufl., neubearbeitet von J. Behn; Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1950), pp. 242-244.

²This position is not new. It was first suggested by Jerome (De Viris Illust., 3).

³D. W. Riddle and H. H. Hutson, New Testament Life and Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1946), p. 199; A. E. Barnett, The New Testament Its Making and Meaning (New York: Abingdon Cokesbury Press, 1946), p. 255.

⁴T. Henshaw, New Testament Literature in the Light of Modern Scholarship (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1952), p. 359.

⁵A. M. Hunter, Interpreting the New Testament 1900-1950 (London: SCM Press, 1951), p. 119. There are still others who, although rejecting the traditional view, will not venture a guess as to authorship. Cf. R. Knopf, H. Leitzmann und H.

Summary and Conclusion.--The Epistle of James was known and used from very early times, although not as Holy Scripture. This was especially true in the West where both the author of the Shepherd of Hermas and Irenaeus reveal acquaintance with the Epistle. Its use as Scripture begins with Origen, and one can ultimately trace back to the influence of the great Alexandrian scholar the Epistle's success in attaining to a place in the Canon of Scripture in both the East and the West. The Epistle formed part of the Syriac Canon and was probably used in the Syrian churches. Its recognition in the West was first evidenced by the appearances of translations of the Epistle, and it was adopted as part of Scripture in the Western church through the immediate influence of Jerome and Augustine. From the early part of the fifth century until the Reformation, the canonical character of the Epistle of James was not questioned. Luther excluded it from his New Testament on dogmatic grounds and was followed by most of the German reformers. Outside of Germany, however, it was generally accepted. The modern criticism of the Epistle begins in the nineteenth century with the German New Testament scholar de Wette, and although over a century and a quarter of criticism has probed the problems of the Epistle, no general agreement has been

Weinel, Einführung in das Neue Testament (Sammlung Topelmann, Die Theologie im Abriss, Band 2, 5 Aufl.; Berlin: Alfred Topelmann, 1949), p. 98.

reached, either with regard to authenticity or the closely related subject of authorship.

One pertinent question relating to the earlier history of the Epistle in the church remains: What prevented its earlier recognition? The untheological nature of the Epistle,¹ the probability that it was only addressed to Jewish-Christian churches, the fact that it appeared to contain a contradiction of the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith, and its lack of historical data have all proved to be hindrances to the universal acceptance of the Epistle. Its lack of claim to apostolic authorship, however, was probably its greatest drawback. The simple statement of the opening sentence of the Epistle, "James, a servant of Jesus Christ," makes no claim to apostolic authorship, and since apostolicity became an early criterion for canonicity, it was only the intrinsic value of the Epistle, recognized first by Origen and also propagated by him, that brought about its inclusion in the Canon of Scripture.

¹A. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 53, has pointed out that writings of a practical nature were used in the early church and that the warning in the Epistle of James concerning daemonic wisdom and many teachers could have been used against the Gnostic heresy.

CHAPTER II

LITERARY RELATIONSHIPS

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We have already discussed the relationship of the Epistle of James to subsequent non-canonical literature.¹ In this section the relationship our Epistle bears to the canonical Scriptures and to certain non-canonical books which are prior to the Epistle is investigated.

A. Canonical Books

1. The Septuagint²

The writer of the Epistle of James cites the Old Testament six times, and although the Epistle is not without indications of the author's knowledge of the Hebrew text, his quotations are from the LXX³ and agree with it, even when it differs from the Hebrew. Jas. 2:8 is a quotation from Lev. 19:18 LXX and is of no special interest. In Jas. 2:11 the seventh commandment is mentioned before the sixth, which corresponds with the text of B in the LXX of Exod. 20:13, 15. This is the order

¹See chap. I above.

²All quotations from the LXX, unless stated otherwise, are from Rahlfs' fourth edition, 1950.

³The only exception is Jas. 4:5.

of Mk. 10:19 (parallel Lk. 18:20), and Rom. 13:9, while Matt. 5:21, 27 has the other order. In the Epistle the LXX's οὐ is changed to μή. Gen. 15:16 is cited in Jas. 2:23. We do not have the text of X and B for this passage, but A reads as follows: καὶ ἐπίστευσεν Ἀβράμ τῷ Θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην. The Epistle contains the passive ἐλογίσθη and not the active of the Hebrew, and includes the word Ἀβράμ which is not in the Hebrew text at all. Actually the only difference between James and the LXX here is that James reads ἐπίστευσεν δέ while the LXX, in all but two of the chief MSS, reads καὶ ἐπίστευσεν. The reading in James is attested by Philo, De Mut. Nom. 33; Rom. 4:3; Clem. Rom. 10:6 and Just. Dial. 92. It is interesting to note that in the same verse James says of Abraham, φίλος Θεοῦ ἐκλήθη. In Gen. 18:17 the LXX (A) reads: Ἀβραὰμ τοῦ παιδὸς μου. These words are "quoted" by Philo (De Sobriet. 56) as Ἀβραὰμ τοῦ φίλος μου, much like the citation in James. It is possible that they both were working with another Greek translation of the Old Testament, but as Zahn suggests, the probability is that this is not an Old Testament quotation at all, but rather something learned in the synagogue.¹ Jas. 4:6 is a quotation from Prov. 3:34 LXX, differing from the LXX only in reading ὁ Θεός instead of κύριος. Neither ὁ Θεός nor κύριος stands in the original; both translate the Hebrew pronoun אֲנִי . Only in 5:20

¹Introduction, I, 120.

does the author of the Epistle depart seriously from the LXX. He may be using another Greek translation of the Old Testament here. The quotation is from Prov. 10:12 and reads in James, καὶ καλύψει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν. The LXX reads, πάντας δὲ τοὺς μὴ φιλονεικούντας καλύπτει φιλία, "but love covers all who are not contentious," whereas the Hebrew is: וְאֵלֶּיךָ יָשׁוּבִים לֹא יִשְׁמְרוּ לָאֱלֹהִים , "but love covereth all sins."

The most difficult citation in the Epistle is found in 4:5, ἢ δοκεῖτε ὅτι κενῶς ἡ γραφὴ λέγει πρὸς φθόνον ἐπιποθεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα ὃ κατῴκισεν ἐν ἡμῖν ; Although by variously punctuating this verse (e. g., placing an interrogation point after λέγει or one after φθόνον) attempts have been made to explain this verse as not being a quotation, the formula ἡ γραφὴ λέγει is conclusive. The difficulty arises in ascertaining whence the citation is made. Wettstein (ad loc.) takes the passage to be an allusion to Wis. 6:11, ἐπιθυμήσατε οὖν τῶν λόγων μου ποθήσατε καὶ παιδευθήσεσθε and 6:23, οὔτε μὴν φθόνῳ τετηκότι συνοδεύσω, ὅτι οὗτος οὐ κοινώσκει σοφίᾳ, and Spitta suggests the apocryphal Eldad and Modad.¹ But it is unnecessary to look outside of the canonical Old Testament in some form of its translation for this citation. The subject of κατῴκισεν, "cause to dwell," cannot be πνεῦμα; it must, therefore, be God. Hort suggests that it is highly probable, then, "that ἐπιποθεῖ has the same subject, making τὸ πνεῦμα accusative, 'He longs

¹Op. cit., p. 121.

for the spirit which He caused to dwell."¹ This would make the statement a reference to the act of God recorded in Gen. 2:27. Whether it is a specific citation of this passage, or of perhaps Gen. 6:3, through some "intermediate source" not now known to us,² or whether it is taken from the Greek Old Testament in another one of its forms, it is impossible to say. Ropes thinks it is "a poetical rendering of the idea of Ex. 20:5."³ *he*

From the citations of the Old Testament discussed above only one conclusion is possible: for the writer of the Epistle of James the Old Testament is the Greek Old Testament.⁴

2. The Synoptic Gospels

Notice has often been taken of the close relationship of the Epistle of James to the words of Jesus as found in the Synoptic Gospels.⁵ Mayor lists two and one half small-type

¹Hort, op. cit., p. 93.

²Cf. Hort, ibid., p. 94: "There are other reasons for supposing the New Testament writers to have used Greek paraphrases of the O. T. resembling the Hebrew Targums and the words may have come literally from one of these. In their vocabulary such paraphrases would certainly not always follow the same limitations of the LXX; and though the LXX sedulously uses *ζᾶλος* etc. only . . . , and avoids *φθόρος* in speaking of God, it by no means follows that a Palestinian paraphrase would do the same."

³Op. cit., p. 262.

⁴It is of interest that James quotes from the LXX (Amos 9:11 f.), when in Acts 15:16 ff. he uses a proof-text from the Old Testament in his speech before the Council.

⁵G. Kittel, op. cit., p. 84: "Es gibt keine Schrift

pages of supposed parallels,¹ and Kittel discusses twenty six "Anklänge" which he feels are worthy of mention.² A list of the more important parallels follows:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Jas. 1:4: ἵνα ᾗτε τέλειοι. | Matt. 5:48: Ἔσθε οὖν ὑμεῖς τέλειοι. |
| Jas. 1:5: αἰτείτω . . . καὶ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ | Matt. 7:7 (Lk. 11:9): αἰτεῖτε καὶ δοθήσεται ὑμῖν. |
| Jas. 1:6: αἰτείτω δὲ ἐν πίστει μηδὲν διακρινόμενος ὁ γὰρ διακρινόμενος . . . | Mk. 11:23f.: καὶ μὴ διακριθῇ . . . ἀλλὰ πιστεύη . . . πάντα ὅσα προσεύχεσθε καὶ αἰτεῖσθε πιστεύετε. |
| Jas. 1:17: πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ . . . ἀνωθεν ἐστὶν καταβαίνων ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων . . . | Matt. 7:11: ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς δώσει ἀγαθὰ . . . |
| Jas. 1:22: γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου, καὶ μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον . . . | Matt. 7:24: πᾶς οὖν ὅστις ἀκούει μου τοὺς λόγους τούτους καὶ ποιεῖ αὐτοὺς . . . Cf. Lk. 6:46, 47. |
| Jas. 2:5: τοὺς πτωχοὺς . . . κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας. | Matt. 5:3: μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. Cf. Lk. 6:20 where the reading is simply |
| Jas. 3:18: καρπὸς δὲ δικαιοσύνης ἐν εἰρήνῃ σπείρεται τοῖς ποιούσιν εἰρήνην. | Matt. 5:9: μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί |
| Jas. 4:3: αἰτεῖτε καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε. | Matt. 7:7: αἰτεῖτε καὶ δοθήσεται ὑμῖν. v. 8: πᾶς ὁ αἰτῶν λαμβάνει. |

des N. T. ausser den Evangelium, die so mit Anklängen an Herrn-worte gespickt ist wie er." Also H. G. Meecham, "The Epistle of James," Expository Times, XLIX (1938), 181-183.

¹Op. cit., pp. lxxxv-lxxxviii.

²Op. cit., pp. 84-90.

Jas. 4:4: μοιχαλίδες

Jas. 4:9: . . . πενθήσατε
καὶ κλαύσατε ὁ γέλως ὑμῶν
πένθος μετατραπήτω . . .

Jas. 5:1-6: ἄγε νῦν οἱ
πλούσιοι κτλ.

Jas. 5:12: μὴ ὀμνύετε,
μήτε τὸν οὐρανὸν μήτε
τὴν γῆν μήτε ἄλλον τινὰ
ὄρκον· ἦτω δὲ ὑμῶν τὸ
ναὶ ναί, καὶ τὸ οὐ οὐ, ἵνα
μὴ ὑπὸ κρίσιν πέσητε.

Matt. 12:39: γενεὰ πονηρὰ καὶ
μοιχαλὶς. Mk. 8:38: ἐν τῇ γενεᾷ
ταύτῃ τῇ μοιχαλίδι.

Lk. 6:25: οὐαί, οἱ γελῶντες νῦν,
ὅτι πανθήσετε καὶ κλαύσετε.

Lk. 6:24: πλήν οὐαὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς
πλουσίοις, ὅτι ἀπέχετε τὴν παρά-
κλησιν ὑμῶν.

Matt. 5:34-37: ἀγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν
μὴ ὀμόσαι ὅλως· μήτε ἐν τῷ
οὐρανῷ ὅτι θρόνος ἐστὶν τοῦ Θεοῦ·
μήτε ἐν τῇ γῇ, ὅτι ὑποπόδιον
ἐστὶν τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ· μήτε εἰς
Ἱεροσόλυμα, ὅτι πόλις ἐστὶν τοῦ
μεγάλου βασιλέως· μήτε ἐν τῇ
κεφαλῇ σου ὁμόσης, ὅτι οὐ δύνασαι
μίαν τρίχα λευκὴν ποιῆσαι ἢ
μέλαιναν. ἔστω δὲ ὁ λόγος ὑμῶν
ναὶ ναί, οὐ οὐ. τὸ δὲ περισσὸν
τούτων ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ ἐστίν.

Although none of the parallels would indicate conclusively literary dependence, there is a clear similarity between these sayings of Jesus found in the Synoptic Gospels and the Epistle. Dibelius suggests a three-fold similarity: (1) The Epistle of James contains, at least in part, "Spruchparanese," i. e., common disconnected exhortatory material. The sayings of Jesus were similarly collected, and thus the Epistle and the sayings of Jesus assembled in the Synoptics belong to the same literary type or classification. (2) There is a similarity of style. Both are fond of imperatives and their choice of illustrative material is very much the same. (3)

There is a community of sentiment ("eine Gemeinsamkeit der Gesinnungen"¹).

Hier wie dort atmen wir die Luft eines ethischen Rigorismus, dessen lapidare Befehle vor Welt und weltlicher Gesinnung warnen, zu Frieden, Sanftmut und Demut mahnen. Es ist die Sphäre des erhörungs-frohen Gebets und des wunderwirkenden Glaubens, . . .²

Spitta, with his theory of a pre-Christian Jewish origin of the Epistle, explains away the similarities on the grounds of a common heritage in Judaism.³ But the similarities are too close (cf. especially Jas. 5:12 with Matt. 5:34 ff.) and too numerous to be thus explained. He is obviously forcing his main thesis to the point of breaking.⁴ Very few New Testament scholars have gone along with Spitta's hypothesis.

While admitting that certain similarities between the Epistle and the sayings of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels rest on a common religious heritage, there is a still closer connection. It is significant that in all the parallels listed there is not a single instance of direct quotation, not even in the

¹Op. cit., p. 27.

²Ibid.

³Op. cit., pp. 155-183.

⁴Hauck's remarks on Spitta's method are worth noting: "The only reason Spitta is able to carry out his thesis is because he represents, in an entirely onesided way, the strong concurrences in the Epistle with the words of the Gospels as insignificant or illusory, and because he overlooks how much James shares in the basic revolution which Jesus brought to ethical interpretation." Op. cit., p. 13.



case of the saying concerning swearing (5:12). The writer of the Epistle seems rather to be quoting freely the sayings of Jesus without express citation. He uses the tradition very much like the Apostle Paul who, although echoing the words of Jesus, very seldom expressly cites them. His best known express citation is in I Cor. 7:10: τοῖς δὲ γεγαμηκόσιν παρ-αγγέλω, οὐκ ἐγὼ ἀλλὰ ὁ κύριος, γυναῖκα ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς μὴ χωρις-θῆναι. In most cases, however, Paul quotes the sayings of Jesus loosely. Examples of his method are found in Rom. 13:7 (Matt. 22:21), Rom. 13:8 (Matt. 22:35-39), Rom. 12:14-19 ff. (Matt. 5:44), I Cor. 13:2 (Matt. 17:20). The way in which Paul uses the Sayings seems to indicate that for him, as well as for the writer of the Epistle of James, there was not yet a crystallized tradition. If this is true, it would have considerable bearing on the date of the Epistle.¹

3. Paul

The closest parallels to the Epistle of James in the writings of Paul are to be found in the Epistle to the Romans.² A careful examination of the more important of these passages

¹Hauck suggests that the way in which the synoptic tradition is used in the Epistle seems to indicate that it belongs to a time before it was customary to refer to the sayings of Jesus in their fixed form. The author seems to stand in the stream of oral tradition. Ibid., p. 12.

²Jas. 1:3 has a close parallel in I Cor. 10:13 and Jas. 2:5 in I Cor. 1:27, but the parallels in Romans are more significant.

has been made by Rendall,¹ and he assigns in every case priority to James. Rom. 5:4 is Jas. 1:3, 4 with a higher finish and "a closer analysis of ethical experience." James' τὸ δόκιμον is amended by Paul to his own more classical δοκιμή. Rom. 2:1-16 is full of reminiscences, conscious or unconscious, of James, e. g., Rom. 2:13 with Jas. 1:22, 25; Rom. 2:1, 3 with Jas. 2:20 and 4:11; and Rom. 2:12 with Jas. 2:12. Rendall observes the use of θησαυρίζειν in Rom. 2:5 (θησαυρίζεις) and Jas. 5:3 (ἐθησαυρίσατε) as meaning (and only in these two places in the New Testament) "storing up that which is evil or destructive." This, he admits, might be accidental if the phrase ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς, occurring in the above Romans passage (2:5), did not occur just two verses following in Jas. 5:5. Priority rests with James since the phrases are detached in his Epistle, whereas Paul combines them into a single expression. Further, Rom. 13:8-10 is simply a "pauline resume" of Jas. 2:8-11, "and careful comparison points unmistakably to literary obligation."²

Rendall makes a good case both for dependence and the posteriority of Paul. However, the parallels are not sufficiently extended or significant in themselves to allow a definite judgment.³ In addition to the examination of verbal parallels,

¹Op. cit., pp. 83-87.

²Ibid., p. 86. Other parallels cited are Jas. 4:1 with Rom. 7:23; Jas. 4:4 with Rom. 8:7.

³W. Sanday and A. Headlam are very skeptical of any literary dependence between Romans and James. A Critical and

similar expressions, etc., an investigation of the character of the author of the Epistle (assuming for the moment that he is to be identified with the brother of the Lord) and his associations with the Apostle Paul will prove of value in determining the relationship of Paul to the Epistle, especially with reference to the highly controversial passage Jas. 2:14-26.

The character of James, the Lord's brother, has unfortunately been greatly colored by the account of Hegesippus, reported in Eusebius.¹ This account represents James as a Nazarene from birth; a man who drank no strong drink nor ate flesh; one who had special access to the Holy Place and was exceedingly zealous for the Law. This report has fixed the character of James in the tradition of the church, despite the fact that there are grave doubts concerning the historicity of Hegesippus' account. Ropes' says of the passage in Eusebius:

The long fragment . . . , whether written by Hegesippus or taken over from his source, is plainly composed in order to do honor to James as an ascetic and martyr The narrative itself, even when purged of inconsistencies, is a legend, betraying no close contact with the events, and nothing can be drawn from it to add to the picture of James' character and position derived from the N. T.³

Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (International Critical Commentary, 5th ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1911), p. lxxviii.

¹Hist. Eccl., II, 23.

²See below, p. 245, where the tradition concerning James, the Lord's brother, is discussed in detail.

³Op. cit., p. 66. Also cf. W. L. Knox, St. Paul and

The statement in Gal. 2:12 where *τινες ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου*¹ are mentioned has also contributed to the widely accepted opinion that James was a strong advocate of the Jewish Law--a kind of overzealous ritualist.² But Gal. 2:12 must be interpreted in the light of other passages in the New Testament which relate to the character and activity of James. An examination of those passages reveals that there is no evidence but that he was a pious Jewish Christian, greatly trusted and respected by the Jews of Jerusalem and friendly to the Apostle Paul and his mission among the Gentiles.

There are four passages in the New Testament which report the interrelationships of James, the Lord's brother, and St. Paul. Acts 21:18-20, written at the close of the third missionary journey, reports the reaction of James and the elders to St. Paul's ministry:

τῇ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ εἰσῆκει ὁ Παῦλος σὺν ἡμῖν πρὸς Ἰάκωβον, πάντες τε παρεχένοντο οἱ πρεσβύτεροι. καὶ ἀσπασάμενος αὐτοὺς ἐξήγειτο καθ' ἐν ἑκάστῳ ὡς ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς

the Church of Jerusalem (Cambridge: University Press, 1925), p. 92: "The narrative of Hegesippus preserved in H. E. II, 23, as to the ascetic habits of S. James, is . . . worthless as it stands in view of the obvious mythical elements which it contains."

¹J. B. Lightfoot says of these: " . . . nothing more can safely be inferred than that they belonged to the Church of Jerusalem. It is not improbable however, that they came invested with some powers from James which they abused." St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (5th ed.; London: Macmillan and Co., 1876), p. 112.

²Cf. Dibelius, op. cit., p. 15 and A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 110.

ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν διὰ τῆς διακονίας αὐτοῦ· οἱ δὲ
ἀκούσαντες ἐδόξαζον τὸν θεόν. . .

Both James and οἱ πρεσβύτεροι are, in this passage, distinguished from the over-zealous Jewish Christians (ζηλωταὶ τοῦ νόμου, v. 20) who were suspicious of the Apostle Paul and his mission to the Gentiles. The reaction of James and the elders upon hearing the report of Paul was quite different from that of the ζηλωταὶ τοῦ νόμου; they glorified God (ἐδόξαζον τὸν θεόν) and attempted to mediate between Paul and these Jewish brethren. There is no evidence whatever of a personal or theological disagreement between James and Paul here.

The same is the case at the Apostolic Council which took place some seven or eight years earlier (cir. A. D. 49). The account in Acts 15 reveals no basic disagreement between James and Paul. It is evident that James did not belong to the group spoken of in 15:5 as τινες τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς αἵρέσεως τῶν Φαρισαίων and who said ὅτι δεῖ περιτέμνειν αὐτοὺς παραγγέλλειν τε τηρεῖν τὸν νόμον Μωϋσέως. James even used the support of Scripture (Amos 9:11 f.) in 15:15-18 to justify Paul's ministry among the Gentiles, and his conclusion (διὸ ἐγὼ κρίνω μὴ περ-
ενοχλεῖν τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν ἔθνων ἐπιστρέφουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν¹), and
recommendation (ἐπιστεῖλαι αὐτοῖς τοῦ ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν ἀλισγημάτων
τῶν εἰδώλων καὶ τῆς πορνείας καὶ πνικτοῦ καὶ τοῦ αἵματος²),
reveal no real differences between him and the great Apostle to
the Gentiles.

¹Acts. 15:19.

²Acts 15:20.

The first eleven verses of the second chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians record another visit¹ which Paul made to the Jerusalem Church and his association with James, the Lord's brother. Here again there is no hint of a basic disagreement. James is expressly included among those who extended the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and Paul (2:9) and is undoubtedly to be included in the οἱ δοκοῦντες of 2:6, of whom Paul says, ἐμοὶ . . . οὐδὲν προσανέθεντο.

James' first encounter with Paul is recorded in Gal. 1:19 (ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου). It is very doubtful that much theology was discussed at this initial meeting. Paul had only been a Christian for a short time (ἔπειτα μετὰ τρία ἔτη 1:18). His theology was still in its formative stage.² Furthermore, it is his purpose at this place in the Epistle to show that on this particular occasion he did not receive any theological information from the leaders of the Jerusalem Church. His gospel was not received from a man or men. This trip to Jerusalem was only a visit (ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι . . .³). He did not

¹We identify this visit with the famine visit of Acts 11:27-30.

²This is not a denial of progress in Paul's thought throughout his whole life. The Epistles give evidence of this progress. However, it must have been some years before he formulated his doctrine of the grace of God, despite the fact that he states he received his Gospel δι' ἀποκαλύψεως.

³Gal. 1:18. ἱστορεῖν although used to mean, "to relate," in some of the papyri, has only one meaning, "to visit," in the

go to consult with Peter and James or to reveal his theology to them.¹ From Gal. 2:2 (καὶ ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ κηρύσσω ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) it would seem that the οἱ δοκοῦντες encountered Paul's theology first-hand for the first time when Paul and Barnabas made the famine visit to Jerusalem. Of course the leaders of the Jerusalem Church were getting word of his teaching before that time. Paul was assuming more and more importance in the Church as is evidenced by Barnabas' call to him to come to Antioch and his year-long preaching mission there. But they had not yet encountered his teaching first-hand. Perhaps Paul's preaching at Antioch on this occasion (cir. A. D. 43), before the famine visit to Jerusalem, gave rise to the misunderstanding which Jas. 2:14-26 refutes.² Enough time (about eight years) had elapsed for Paul's theology to have taken more

New Testament. Cf. J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and other Non-Literary Sources (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914-1916), p. 308.

¹Luther's comment on this verse brings out the meaning admirably. "'I went,' said Paul, 'to see Peter, not to consult with him.'"

²I think there can be little doubt that the passage has in mind certain Pauline ideas. Cf. Moffatt, op. cit., p. 466: "It would be gratuitous scepticism, . . . to doubt that Jas. draws upon the conceptions that Paul had already minted for the primitive church." However, those conceptions have been perverted. Zahn shows that in order to maintain that Jas. 2:14-26 is a refutation of Paul's doctrine of justification by faith, "it is necessary to assert that James misunderstood Paul's doctrine in a way almost incredible, or that he perverted it willfully, . . ." Introduction, op. cit., I, 124.

definite shape, and since the Antioch Church was one of the first Christian communities to hear Paul's preaching, the possibility for misunderstanding would be greater.¹ At any rate, the Antioch Church in the time preceding the famine visit might be a good place and time to locate the error, undoubtedly originating from a misconception of Paul,² which the author of the Epistle of James refutes in 2:14-26. This would also account for the lack of verbal parallels or express quotation of the Pauline writings in the Epistle of James, since Paul was yet to write his first missionary letter.

4. I Peter

The literary relationship of the Epistle of James to the First Epistle of Peter is undeniably close.³ Even a cursory comparison of the two Epistles indicates this.⁴ Bishop

¹This was not the only time Paul was misunderstood. The way in which Paul introduces objectors in Rom. 3:8 would indicate that he himself realized that his teaching gave rise to such misunderstanding. Cf. also Rom. 6:1.

²The question arises that if Jas. 2:14-26 is directed against a misunderstanding of Paul, why is the problem of faith versus works dealt with, but no mention is made of the whole question of Jewish ritual? The answer to this is, that although the question concerning Jewish ritual was an issue at the time, it did not become a burning one until after Paul's first missionary journey.

³It is interesting to note that although I Peter has more parallels in the Epistle of James than in any other Epistle of the New Testament, it yet reveals great differences in general tone and vocabulary.

⁴Cf. e. g., Jas. 1:2 with I Pet. 1:6, 7, where Jas. has πειρασμοῖς περιπέσσητε ποικίλοις and Peter has ἐν ποικίλοις

Carrington's table of the order of subjects dealt with in the two Epistles gives further evidence of their close relationship:¹

James		Peter A	Peter B
1:1	The Diaspora	1:1	
1:2	Various temptations	1:6	
1:3	Testing of faith	1:7	
1:11	Isa. 40:6	1:24	
1:12	The crown		5:4
1:18	Begotten by a word	1:23	
1:21	Salvation	2:2 (1:9)	
1:27	Pure worship (spiritual sacrifice)	2:5	
3:13	Honest "walking"	2:12	
4:1	Lusts making war	2:11	
4:6	Prov. 3:34		5:5b
4:7	Submit		5:5a
4:7	Resist the devil		5:9
4:10	Be humbled		5:6

This parallelism can be explained in one of three ways:

(1) Peter had read the Epistle of James and is quoting from it or at least using some of its ideas. Zahn,² Parry, Spitta, Mayor,³ Rendall and A. Meyer, to mention but a few, subscribe

περασμοῖς, and where the phrase τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως is common to both.

¹The Primitive Christian Catechism (Cambridge: University Press, 1940), p. 28. Bishop Carrington assumes the theory here that I Peter really consists of two epistles, the break occurring between 4:11 and 12. The parallelism only extends through Jas. 4:10.

²Introduction, op. cit., I, 133. " . . . if for no other reason than that the author of I Peter, in his attitude toward other N. T. books as well . . . shows himself as one whose tendency is to appropriate the ideas of others without possessing any marked literary individuality of his own."

³Mayor goes so far as to say that Peter "took the Epistle of St. James as his model, but engrafted upon it the more advanced Christian doctrine which he shared with St. Paul." Op. cit., p. cil.

to this theory. (2) James was familiar with I Peter and was appropriating it. This position is best stated by B. Weiss;¹ it has less to commend itself than the first theory mentioned above.² (3) James and Peter had come under common religious and literary influences; the similarities can be explained on the grounds that they were working with common materials.³

The researches of Carrington⁴ and Selwyn⁵ relating to the primitive catechisms of the Church have special relevance to the problem of the relationship of the Epistle of James to I Peter. These investigations have demonstrated conclusively that many of the interrelationships between the Epistles in the New Testament are to be explained on the grounds of the use of common catechetical or paraenetic materials. The need for such material must have arisen very early in the church, and the familiarity of the early Christians with Jewish methods

¹A Manual of Introduction to the New Testament, Eng. trans., (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1896), II, 106. Selwyn doubts direct dependence, but if it exists, he favors dependence of James on Peter. The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1949), p. 463. Cf. also Moffatt, Introduction, op. cit., p. 338.

²Rendall's excellent study seems to refute decisively the theory of I Peter's priority. Op. cit., pp. 96-100.

³This view is taken by Plummer, The General Epistles of St. James and St. Jude (The Expositor's Bible, ed. W. R. Nicoll; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897), p. 59; Ropes, op. cit., p. 22; Hauck, op. cit., pp. 14, 15; Carrington, op. cit., pp. 27-29 and E. G. Selwyn, op. cit., pp. 19, 462, 463.

⁴Op. cit., pp. 27-57 especially.

⁵Op. cit., pp. 365-466.

of instructing proselytes made the use of such material very probable. Bishop Carrington, as the result of a careful investigation of parallel passages in the New Testament Epistles, especially Colossians, Ephesians, I Peter, James and Hebrews, has isolated out a "primitive Christian catechism" with four points to which he has given the Latin names Deponentes (Wherefore putting off all evil), Subiecti (Submit yourselves), Vigilate (Watch and pray), and Resistite (Resist the devil). Both the order in which these subjects occur in the Epistles mentioned above, and the remarkably similar vocabulary used, strongly suggest a common source. Several of the parallels between the Epistle of James and I Peter fall into the pattern. Jas. 1:21 (Deponentes)=I Pet. 2:1 and has parallels in Col. 3:8, Eph. 4:25 and Heb. 12:1. Jas. 4:7a (Subiecti)=I Pet. 2:13, 5:5 and has parallels in Col. 3:18, Eph. 5:21 and Heb. 12:9. Jas. 4:7b (Resistite)=I Pet. 5:9 and has parallels in Col. 4:12 and Eph. 6:11.

Selwyn has carried forward the investigations of Carrington another step, and his results aid in accounting for even more of the parallels between James and I Peter. He finds traces of not one but several catechetical forms underlying certain passages of the Epistles: (1) A first baptismal form which "seems to have had specially in mind the elementary needs of Gentile Christians and the fears of Jewish Christians, as these were made clear at the council of Jerusalem."¹ Jas. 3:13=I Pet. 2:12 and

¹Ibid., p. 460.

Jas. 4:1=I Pet. 2:11 belong to this source. (2) A second baptismal form resulting from the amplification of the "rudimentary pattern of teaching which was summarized in, or derived from, the Apostolic Decree."¹ Jas. 4:7, 10=I Pet. 5:5, 6 stem from this form. Also the baptismal teaching of Jas. 1:18, 21=I Pet. 1:3, 23, 2:1, 2. (3) A persecution document, based largely on verba Christi, and compiled with a view to helping those undergoing difficult times. Jas. 1:2, 3=I Pet. 1:6, 7 and Jas. 5:8=I Pet. 4:7, 8 are accounted for by this form. Also the crown of Jas. 1:12=I Pet. 5:4, although occurring in Revelation (eight times) and in I Cor. 9:25 and II Tim. 4:8, might have been present in this persecution document. Selwyn finds difficulty in explaining the different use made of the Old Testament by James and Peter (cf. Jas. 4:6=I Pet. 5:5, where quite different uses are made of the Old Testament passage, and Jas. 1:11=I Pet. 1:24, where one paraphrases and the other quotes), but his theory of underlying catechisms or catechetical material is far more satisfactory in explaining the parallels in James and I Peter than either theory of direct dependence.²

B. Earlier Non-Canonical Literature

1. Ecclesiasticus

The most important parallels are as follows:³

¹Ibid.

²See below, where the theory is discussed in detail, p. 91.

³For a complete list cf. Mayor, op. cit., pp. cxvi-cxviii.

Ecclus. 41:25, καὶ μετὰ τὸ δοῦναι μὴ ἀνείδιξε, Jas. 1:5.

Ecclus. 1:28, καὶ μὴ προσέλθῃς αὐτῷ ἐν καρδίᾳ διττῇ, Jas. 1:6-8.

Ecclus. 15:11-14, 17, μὴ εἴπῃς ὅτι Διὰ κύριον ἀπέστην· ἃ γὰρ ἐμίσησεν, οὐ ποιήσει. μὴ εἴπῃς ὅτι Ἄυτός με ἐπλήνησεν· οὐ γὰρ χρείαν ἔχει ἀνδρὸς ἁμαρτωλοῦ. πᾶν βδέλυγμα ἐμίσησεν ὁ κύριος, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀγαπητὸν τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν. αὐτὸς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐποίησεν ἄνθρωπον καὶ ἀφῆκεν αὐτόν ἐν χειρὶ διαβουλίου αὐτοῦ. ἔναντι ἀνθρώπων ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ὁ θάνατος, καὶ ὁ ἐὰν εὐδοκήσῃ δοθήσεται αὐτῷ, Jas. 1:12-15.

Ecclus. 4:29, μὴ γίνου θρασὺς (S* A read ταχύς) ἐν γλώσσῃ σου καὶ νωθρὸς καὶ παρειμένος ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις σου and 5:11, γίνου ταχύς ἐν ἀκροάσει σου καὶ ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ φθέγγου ἀποκριτῆς Jas. 1:19.

Ecclus. 1:22, οὐ δυνήσεται θυμὸς ἄδικος δικαιωθῆναι· ἡ γὰρ ῥοπὴ τοῦ θυμοῦ αὐτοῦ πτώσις αὐτῷ, Jas. 1:20.

Ecclus. 14:1, μακάριος ἀνὴρ, ὃς οὐκ ὠλίσθησεν ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐ κατενύγη ἐν λύπῃ ἁμαρτιῶν, Jas. 3:2.

Ecclus. 29:10, 11, ἀπόλεσον ἀργύριον δι' ἀδελφὸν καὶ φίλον, καὶ μὴ ἰωθήτω ὑπὸ τὸν λίθον εἰς ἀπώλειαν. Θὲς τὸν θησαυρὸν σοῦ κατ' ἐντολὰς ὑψίστου, καὶ λυσιτελήσει σοι μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ χρύσιον, Jas. 5:3.

Ecclus. 34:22, φονεύων τὸν πλησίον ὁ ἀφαιρούμενος ἐμβίωσιν, καὶ ἐκχέων αἷμα ὁ ἀποστερῶν μισθὸν μισθίου, Jas. 5:4.

It is possible that the author of the Epistle of James had read Ecclesiasticus. There are many similarities between

the two writers both of thought and expression, but the parallels listed above do not give positive evidence of literary dependence.¹ The most we can say from the evidence is that both authors were working from common materials or were in contact with the same stream of thought.²

2. The Wisdom of Solomon

The coincidences between the Wisdom of Solomon and the Epistle of James are not so marked or numerous as those of Ecclesiasticus. The most striking observation with reference to these coincidences is that they are much more numerous in the first five chapters of Wisdom, become less so in chapters 6-10, and after chapter ten do not occur at all.³ This fact is especially interesting relative to the theory of the Palestinian origin of the first part of the Wisdom of Solomon.⁴ It would

¹A. Plummer heartily disagrees. "Although some doubts have been expressed on the subject, the number of similarities, both of thought and expression, between the Epistle of St. James and Ecclesiasticus is too great to be reasonably accounted for without the supposition that St. James was not only acquainted with the book, but fond of its contents." Op. cit., p. 69.

²Hauck's general statement on the relationship of the Epistle of James to the Apocryphal literature is worth noting: "Ein Vergleich der apocryphen und anderer spätjüdischen Literatur, soweit sie Ermahnungen bringen, mit Jc zeigt, wie stark der gemeinsame Gedankenstrom ist, der hier durchläuft, und von dem auch Jc berührt ist." Op. cit., p. 11.

³Wis. 1:1-3=Jas. 1:6-8; Wis. 1:11=Jas. 4:11, 5:9; Wis. 2:4=Jas. 4:14; Wis. 2:10-20=Jas. 2:6, 5:6; Wis. 3:4-6=Jas. 1:2, 3, 12, 13; Wis. 6:7=Jas. 4:6; Wis. 7:29f.=Jas. 1:17.

⁴For observations on this theory cf. Charles, op. cit., I, 524, 525.

seem that the author of the Epistle of James had closest contact with the thought of that section of Wisdom which originated in Palestine, and this observation (assuming, of course, that the Palestinian-origin theory is correct) would have some significance in determining the place of origin of our Epistle.

The coincidences are not of the kind which would indicate literary dependence.¹ Only the subject matter dealt with is similar, as for example: the oppression of the poor, tribulation as a testing from God, arrogance, the transitory nature of riches, etc.

3. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs

This work, written by a Pharisee, originally in Hebrew, towards the close of the second century B. C., shows more similarities to the Epistle of James than any other Jewish pseudepigraph, with the exception of Ecclesiasticus. The Testaments are remarkable for their high ethical teachings and form a bridge over "the chasm that divides the ethics of the Old and New Testaments."²

The strict and plain moral teaching and the simple and devout piety of the Testaments are but little tinged with formalism or legalism, and they reveal

¹H. A. A. Kennedy points out the similar use of in Wis. 1:14 and 7:5 with Jas. 1:23 and 3:6. This is no indication, however, of literary dependence. "The Hellenistic Atmosphere of the Epistle of James," Expositor, 8th series, II (1911), 40.

²Charles, op. cit., II, 282.

an attractive type of popular religion such as can well have nourished itself on the O. T. Psalms, and in which many not unworthy parallels to the teaching of the Gospels are to be found.¹

Some of the parallels to the Epistle of James are quite close and even reveal verbal resemblances:

Test. Jos. 2:7, ἐν δέκα πειρασμοῖς δόκιμον ἀπέδειξε με καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτοῖς ἐμακροθύμησα· ὅτι μέγα φαρακόν ἐστὶν ἡ μακροθυμία καὶ πολλὰ ἀγαθὰ δίδωσιν ἡ ὑπομονή, Jas. 2:1-4.

Test. Zab. 8:3, ὅσον γὰρ ἄνθρωπος σπλαχνίζεται εἰς τὸν πλῆσιον αὐτοῦ, τοσοῦτον καὶ ὁ κύριος εἰς αὐτόν, Jas. 2:13.

Test. Benj. 6:5, ἡ ἀγαθὴ διάνοια οὐκ ἔχει δύο γλώσσας εὐλογίας καὶ κατάρας, ὕβρεως καὶ τιμῆς, ἡσυχίας καὶ παραχῆς, ὑποκρίσεως καὶ ἀληθείας, [πεινᾶς καὶ πλουτοῦ] ἀλλὰ μίαν ἔχει περὶ πάντας εὐλικρινῇ καὶ καθαρὰν διάθεσιν, Jas. 3:9, 10.

Test. Nephth. 8:4, καὶ ὁ διάβολος φεύζεται ἀφ' ἡμῶν, Jas. 4:7.

Test. Dan 6:2, ἐχγίστατε τῷ θεῷ, Jas. 4:8.

Test. Benj. 4:1, ἴδετε οὖν, τέκνα μου, τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἀνδρὸς τὸ τέλος, Jas. 5:11.

In addition to these more-or-less close verbal parallels the Testaments deal with the questions of envy, lust, long-suffering, humility, pride and anger which can also be found in the Epistle of James. But here again the similarities are best explained by a common background in a particularly morally elevated type of Judaism. Literary dependence is unlikely.

¹Ropes, op. cit., p. 20.

4. Philo

A host of parallels to our Epistle can be cited from Philo.¹ These are often so close as to presume some kind of connection and to prompt confident statements of dependence.² Whether there is direct literary dependence is difficult to say.³ A safer conclusion would be that James' agreement with Philo shows that he had not been left completely untouched by the stream of Hellenistic thought. These ideas were undoubtedly penetrating Judaism to some degree at least.⁴ But even when due allowances are made for these evidences of contact, direct or indirect, with the great Hellenistic Jew, it remains that the Epistle of James is much less Alexandrian than Palestinian in its thought-content and literary style. Philo is full of elaborate allegory. James is entirely free from it. James has his roots deep in Palestinian soil, whereas Philo ranges over the whole Mediterranean thought-world. James makes

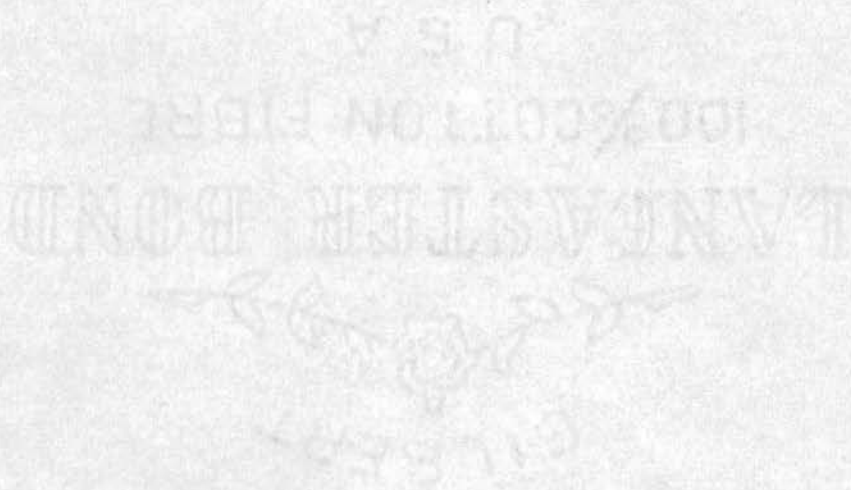
¹For a complete list cf. Mayor, op. cit., pp. cxxi-cxxiv. Some of the more striking parallels are discussed by H. A. A. Kennedy, op. cit.

²Cf. H. G. Meecham, "The Epistle of James," Hellenistic Seminar Manchester University, Expository Times, XLIX (1948), 182. One of the closest parallels is Jas. 3:15, σοφία ἀνωθεν κατερχομένη, with Philo De Prof. 30, σοφίαν ἀνωθεν ἀμβροθεῖσαν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ. The parallels in Philo to Jas. 3:6 and 1:17 are discussed below, pp. 102, 107.

³The difficulty is evidenced by the differences of opinion expressed by scholars ranging from no contact whatever to very close dependence.

⁴See below, pp. 98 ff.

simple, powerful, straightforward ethical statements in a style not to be found in the works of the great Alexandrian. If James is dependent upon Philo, the dependence has not effected either the thought or literary form of the Epistle to any considerable degree. The more significant parallels will be treated below as they relate to the topic under discussion.



CHAPTER III

THE LITERARY CHARACTER OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

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The importance of the literary character of the Epistle to its understanding is to be seen from the fact that some of our best commentators deal with this question first and in considerable detail.¹ To understand the literary form of the Epistle of James is to solve one of its most baffling problems and to come into possession of a valuable key for the solution of other Ratsel of the Epistle.

James purports to be an Epistle, and in the sense that Deissman understands the word, it is.² The opening statement *Ἰάκωβος θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δούλος ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ χαίρειν* is a typical epistolary

¹Both Ropes and Dibelius deal with this question at the very outset of their works on the Epistle. The opening words of the latter's commentary are: "Wer ein Schriftstück als Ganzes verstehen will, muss von seiner literarischen Art eine Vorstellung haben." Op. cit., p. 1.

²He distinguishes between a letter and an epistle, the latter being literary and having commonality with the former only in form. "The Epistle of James is essentially a piece of literature, an occasional writing intended for all Christendom --an Epistle." "Epistolary Literature," Encyclopaedia Biblica, ed. T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1899-1903), II, 1328. Cf. also Deissmann's Bible Studies, trans. A. Grieve (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901), pp. 3-59, and Light from the Ancient East, trans. L. R. M. Strachan from 4th German ed. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1927), pp. 242, 243.

address.¹ Hundreds of papyri letters have been uncovered from the sands of Egypt which bear the same or a similar opening address, and there is abundant evidence that, in the Hellenistic world, such non-epistolary material as we find in James was often given an epistolary address and circulated as a "letter."² But the apparent or purported literary character of the Epistle does not explain the literary forms which underlie it. These forms must be discovered by a careful study of the Epistle itself, and by a comparison with the commonly employed literary forms of the period. Two diverse conclusions of importance have been suggested as to the literary character of the Epistle of James during the past forty years.³ Before suggesting a solution of our own, let us look at these two theories.

A. The Diatribe Theory

From a study of its literary forms J. H. Ropes concluded

¹ *χαίρειν* is equivalent to the Latin *salutem*. It is used in Acts 15:23 in the letter which the Church Council sent out to the Gentile believers and in Acts 23:26 in Lysias's letter to Felix. Cf. J. A. Robinson's collection of Greek letters in *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1904), pp. 276-280 and Deissmann's collection of papyri letters in *Light from the Ancient East*, *op. cit.*, chap. III.

²Cf. Ropes, *op. cit.*, p. 7, where he cites as examples the tracts of counsel of Aristotle to Alexander and to Themison, King of Cyprus, and the letters of Epicurus.

³A. Meyer's Jewish allegory theory is not included here since it has been largely rejected by New Testament scholars. P. Feine expresses a typical reaction: "So geistvoll die These A. Meyers ist, sie ist eigentlich zu geistvoll." *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (8 Aufl.; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1951), p. 390.

that the Epistle of James reveals many of the characteristics of the diatribe. The diatribe was a short moral or ethical address developed initially by the Stoics and the Cynics but not restricted to them in the following centuries.

Certain stylistic features of the Epistle of James agree with the peculiar features of style of the diatribe.¹ James' enlivened speech raises itself almost to the level of dialogue, e. g., θέλεις δὲ γινῶναι, ὦ ἄνθρωπε κενέ, ὅτι ἡ πίστις χωρὶς τῶν ἔργων ἀρχὴ ἐστίν ; 2:20. James uses brief questions and answers: κακοπαθεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν ; προσευχέσθω· εὐθυμεῖ τις ; ψαλλέτω· ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν ; προσκαλεσάσθω τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας 5:13, 14. The Epistle also reveals other characteristics peculiar to the diatribe, e. g., rhetorical questions: ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν , 2:14; harsh speech: ὦ ἄνθρωπε κενέ, 2:20 and μοιχαλίδες, 4:4; the introduction of the opposing speaker with ἀλλ' ἐρεῖ τις , 2:18, and certain formulas of address such as: ὦ ἄνθρωπε κενέ, 2:20; βλέπεις, 2:22; ὁράτε, 2:24, ἴστε, ἔστω, 1:19; τις λέγει, 2:14, 16; οὐκ ἔστιν, 3:10; διὸ λέγει, 4:6; and ἰδοὺ, 3:4, 5; 5:4, 7, 9, 11. The choice of

¹For a history of the form and development of the diatribe cf. P. Wendland, Die hellenistisch-römische Kultur in ihren Beziehungen zu Judentum und Christentum (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, erster Band: Zweiter Teil; 3 Aufl.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1912), pp. 75-96, and R. Bultmann, Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe (Forschungen zur Religion und Litteratur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, hrsg. von W. Bousset und H. Gunkel; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910), pp. 10-58.

illustration, especially in 3:2-12, is significant. This passage with its ὁ προχὸς τῆς γενέσεως certainly reveals some connection, either directly or indirectly, with Hellenistic thought and culture¹ as do other turns of expression in the Epistle. But it is a mistake to look for the basic orientation of the Epistle of James on the basis of such passages in Hellenistic literary forms. Ropes' theory, although it has added much to our understanding of certain Hellenistic literary forms which underlie the Epistle of James, fails to do justice to the basic Semitic orientation of the Epistle. Bultmann's statement regarding the relationship of Paul's writings to Greek and Semitic forms is in point here. He emphasizes the fact that both elements, the Greek and the Semitic, must be recognized if we are to arrive at a proper judgment.² This is certainly applicable to our consideration of the Epistle of James. The author is familiar with certain Hellenistic literary forms as is evidenced by the diatribe-like character of 2:1-13; 2:14-26; 4:1-10, but his basic orientation is Semitic, not Hellenistic, Jewish, not Greek. W. L. Knox has suggested that the "lively dialogue form had penetrated into the Greek-speaking synagogues of Jerusalem, and even into the general

¹See below, p. 100, for a discussion of this passage.

²Bultmann's words are: "Wenn beide Elemente, das griechische und das jüdische, als wirksam erkannt und nachgewiesen werden könnten, so würde sich erst das rechte Bild von der literarischen Persönlichkeit des Paulus ergeben." Op. cit., pp. 3, 4.

usage of the synagogue sermon."¹ We will be on surer ground in seeking the basic literary orientation of the Epistle of James on Semitic rather than Hellenistic soil.

B. The Paraenesis Theory

The theory that the Epistle of James is a paraenetic tract is rejected by Ropes² but is taken up by Dibelius and developed in detail. By paraenesis Dibelius means "einen Text, der Mahnungen allgemein sittlichen Inhalts aneinanderreihet."³ In the New Testament he finds the closest parallels to our Epistle in certain "non-epistolary" sections of Paul, e. g., I Thess. 4:1-12; 5:1 ff.; Gal. 5:13 ff.; 6; Rom. 12:13; Col. 3:4. These sections, which of all of Paul's writings show the fewest characteristics of epistolary writing, are not, according to Dibelius, original with the Apostle. He is working in these passages with common exhortative material, well known maxims, in other words with paraenesis. There are other examples of paraenesis to be found in the New Testament. The sayings of

¹"The Epistle of James," Journal of Theological Studies, XLVI (1945), 10.

²Ropes can see little similarity between paraenetic tracts and the Epistle of James as seen by his statement; " . . . both in form and spirit they are as far removed from the Epistle of James as Lord Chesterfield's Letters Written to His Son are from a sermon of John Wesley." Op. cit., p. 18.

³Op. cit., p. 4.

Jesus belong to this literary classification.¹ The thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews is another example, and outside of the New Testament in early Christian literature there are paraenetical passages in the Epistle of Barnabas, and the "Two Ways" of the Didache and the Mandata of Hermas.

The early Christian paraenesis derives from both Greek and Jewish sources. On the Greek side the earliest examples of paraenesis are to be found in Isocrates' Ad Nicoclem and Nicocles and Pseudo-Isocrates' Ad Demonicum. These were combinations of the wisdom literature of popular philosophy and the maxims of comedy and were the predecessors of the gnostic and florilegia collections of a later period. Hellenistic Judaism provided the means of contact for Christianity with this particular literary type. The Hellenistic Jews had collected in their wisdom literature a great mass of material, greatly varied and of diverse origin. When this material, a kind of gnostic poetry, was converted into prose, e. g., Tobit 4:5-9; 12:6-10, we have paraenesis in the sense in which we find it in the Epistle of James. Examples of other types of paraenesis may be seen in the poem Pseudo-Phocylides, the sayings of Pseudo-Menander, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Talmud tractate, Pirke Aboth.

¹The initial and final sections of the Epistle of James contain material especially similar to the sayings of Jesus found in Matthew and Luke.

The chief literary characteristics of the paraenetic tract are found in the Epistle of James. Dibelius lists four in particular: (1) a manifest eclecticism; (2) a lack of real coherence (artificial coherence is attained by means of catch-words, e. g., *λείπόμενοι . . .λείπεται*, 1:4, 5); (3) the repetition of the same theme in different places; (4) the lack of a definite situation to which the exhortations are addressed.¹

Dibelius has broken new ground with his penetrating study of the literary forms of the Epistle. He certainly has brought us closer to the true literary character of the Epistle of James by his insistence that both Hellenistic and Semitic literature be taken into consideration in arriving at any decision. However, he pushes some of his arguments too far. The Epistle is not without some thought-coherence. Indeed, some commentators have argued with great force for the complete coherence of the Epistle.² Furthermore, the Epistle is not without indications that it is being addressed to a definite situation,³ cf. 2:1-7; 2:14-26; 3:1-12 and 5:1-6. Due consideration

¹Op. cit., pp. 6-8.

²Notable examples are to be found in J. Parry, A Discussion of the General Epistle of St. James (London: C. J. Clay and Sons, 1903), pp. 8-16; Hort, op. cit., pp. 11 f.; A. T. Cadoux, op. cit., pp. 5-9 and Schrammberger, op. cit., pp. 77-88.

³J. Weiss is of the opinion that the Epistle is addressed "to a locally restricted circle in closely established social and religious relationships." The History of Primitive Christianity, Engl. trans. ed. F. C. Grant (New York: Wilson-Erickson, 1937), II, 743 f.

must be given to the presence of traditional exhortative material, especially in 4:1-10, but the Epistle gives evidence of the strong personality of the author which shines through almost every verse.

C. The Homily Theory

The theory which accounts for more of the facts is that which identifies the Epistle of James with a sermon (especially a synagogue sermon), or better, excerpts from a number of sermons. This idea was first hinted at by Martin Luther in one of his pronouncements on the Epistle. Attempting to explain the origin of the Epistle he says:

I imagine it was some good pious man or other who took up a few statements from the disciples of the apostles and so threw them on paper, or perhaps it was composed by another from his sermon.¹

Since Luther's day many commentators have remarked of the similarity which the Epistle reveals to a sermon or at least sermonic materials,² but none have developed the idea in detail. J. S. Stevenson, writing in the Expository Times, has admirably expressed the impression which the Epistle of James has had on many of its commentators:

Look at it as a collection of little sermonettes, or sermon notes, and you feel at once that you are sitting in the synagogue, and hearing the very tones in which the dear old saint addressed his readers

¹Sämmtliche Werke, op. cit., LXIII, 157.

²Among others P. Feine, H. A. A. Kennedy, J. Moffatt, J. Weiss, B. W. Bacon, E. Goodspeed and A. Barnett.

Someone suggests to James . . . that a letter from him would be very much appreciated by the Jewish Christians of the Dispersion, and would help towards the unity of the Church, and the old man agrees to write; but what is he to say: What better than just that which he has been saying . . . in the . . . synagogues? . . . And so we have bits out of his addresses¹

Unfortunately, the subject of the character, form and style of the ancient Jewish synagogue sermon has been strangely neglected. Definitive works on this subject are hard to find. With the exception of L. Zunz's monumental work,² a section in I. Elbogen³ and two monographs by A. Marmorstein,⁴ the subject has been left, for the most part, untouched by both Protestant and Jewish scholars alike. Marmorstein remarks:

It amounts almost to a platitude to emphasize the fact that the inner content of a literary work cannot be properly understood without understanding its external form. Still, in our studies and researches up to now, the latter has been more or less neglected. It is customary to ignore or to deny style, form, and beauty in

¹"St. James' Sermon Notes," Expository Times, XXIV (1923), 44.

²Die Gottesdienstliche Vorträge der Juden historisch entwickelt (Berlin: A. Asher, 1832), pp. 329-360. A second edition of this work appeared in 1892, and from this edition a recent (1948) translation into modern Hebrew has been published in Jerusalem.

³Der jüdische Gottesdienst in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung (Leipzig: Gustav Fock, 1913), pp. 194-198.

⁴"The Background of the Haggadah," Hebrew Union College Annual, VI (1929), pp. 183-204. "Synagogue Sermons in the First Three Centuries," London Quarterly Review, Oct. 1916, p. 227 f. There is also a brief section on this subject in S. Maybaum, Jüdische Homiletik (Berlin: Dümmler, 1890), pp. 1-29.

the literary productions of the scribes, in their homilies and sermons, their parables and similies, their thoughts or teachings. The inner meaning is the chief thing, the external form is of no consequence.¹

An examination of the literary character of the Haggadah as preserved in the homiletical and expository Midrashim reveals striking similarities to the literary forms found in the Epistle of James.

1. Dialogue

Attention has already been drawn to the presence of dialogue in the Epistle of James.² The author of the Epistle is especially adept at using it along with the introduction of an alleged or real objector as in 2:18, using the formula ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τις. The Jewish homilists had at least four formulas with which they introduced an alleged or real objection or objector.³ The one most similar to James' ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τις is וְאִם יֵשׁ לְךָ מִי שֶׁיֹּאמַר "but if someone tells you, so reply to him." This formula is to be found in the Haggadah of the Tannaim as early as the second century.⁴

The following are examples taken from the Pesikta des Rab Kahana which according to Buber, is "die älteste in Paläs-

¹"The Background of the Haggadah," op. cit., p. 184.

²See above, p. 73.

³"The Background of the Haggadah," op. cit., p. 192, where Marmorstein lists these.

⁴Ibid.

tina redigirte Haggada,"¹ and is probably our best source for discovering what the ancient Jewish synagogue sermon was like. The first example concerns the building of the Tabernacle and includes a dialogue between Moses and God.

R. Simeon of Sichnin said in the name of R. Levi: In the time when God said unto Moses: Make me a dwelling place, he would have brought four posts (κοῦρός) and would have stretched out the dwelling place over these, and then it happened that God showed to Moses red, green, black and white fire and said to him: Make me a dwelling. Lord of the world, Moses said to God, where shall I get red, green, black and white fire? God said to him: After the pattern which you saw on the mount. Ex. 25:40.²

In the passage which follows there is a brief dialogue between a Gentile and Rabban Gamaliel. The discussion centers around the Shekinah and God's revelation of Himself to Moses in the bush.

R. Acha bar Kahana said: It says in Ex. 25:22: 'And there will I meet with thee.' From this it follows that the room itself behind the curtain is not devoid of the Shekinah. A Gentile asked Rabban Gamaliel: Why did God reveal himself in a thorn bush? If he had revealed himself to him (Gamaliel answered) in a carob tree or in a fig tree, would you have thus asked? Rather it should teach you that there is no place on earth devoid of the Shekinah.³

The expositional Midrashim also reveal this literary characteristic. Two examples follow. The first occurs in Leviticus Rabbah 27.4 where R. Judah is concerned with the

¹Quoted by Wünsche in Pesikta des Rab Kahana (Leipzig: Otto Schulze, 1885), p. ix.

²Ibid., p. 3.

³Ibid., p. 5.

text (Eccl. 3:15), "That which hath been is now."

R. Judah explains: If a man should tell you that if Adam had not sinned and eaten from the tree, he would have lived and endured forever, tell him that there has already been the case of Elijah who did not sin, and lives and endures forever. 'And that which is to be hath already been' (ib). If a man should tell you that the Holy One, blessed be He, will in the future bring us a resurrection from the dead, tell him: 'It has already occurred through Elijah, through Elisha, and through Ezekiel.'¹

The second example from the expository Midrashim occurs in a homily on Lam. 2:9b. "Her king and her princes are among the Gentiles, the Law is no more."

Should a person tell you there is wisdom among the nations, believe it; as it is written, 'Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, destroy the wise men out of Edom, and discernment out of the mouth of Esau?' (Obad. 8). But if he tells you that there is Torah among the nations, do not believe it; because it is written, Her king and her princes are among the nations [where] Torah is no more.²

2. Method of Address

Another striking similarity between our Epistle and the Jewish homilies is the method of addressing the audience. No less than fifteen times in the Epistle of James the author addresses his hearers as "brethren."³ This method of address is

¹All citations from Midrash Rabbah and the Babylonian Talmud are from the Soncino editions of these works unless otherwise stated.

²Midrash Lamentations 2.9b.

³There are three variations: "brethren," "my brethren," "my beloved brethren." The references are 1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19.

common in the Old Testament, e. g., Judg. 19:23; I Sam. 30:23; I Chron. 28:2. It is often used in the New Testament, e. g., Rom. 7:4; I Cor. 1:10; I Thess. 1:4; I Jn. 3:13. ἀδελφοί as an address occurs with frequency in the speeches in Acts, e. g., 1:16; 2:29; 3:17; 6:3; 7:2, 26; 13:15, 26, 38; 15:7, 13; 22:1; 23:1, 5, 6; 28:17. Its occurrence in Acts 13:15 is especially instructive. Paul and Barnabas had come to Antioch in Pisidia and on the Sabbath had entered into the synagogue. After the reading of the Law there followed the prophetic lesson (haftara) from which the homily took its cue. On this occasion the rulers of the synagogue sent unto Paul and Barnabas and addressed them, ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, εἰ τίς ἐστὶν ἐν ὑμῖν λόγος παρακλήσεως¹ πρὸς τὸν λαόν, λέγετε. Paul accepted the invitation and delivered the sermon of the day.² Twice during this sermon Paul addresses his hearers ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί. Ropes suggests that this method of address may have "belonged to the homiletical style of the synagogue and was brought thence into

¹ λόγος παρακλήσεως was probably a synagogue expression for the homily which followed the reading of the Scripture lesson.

²We are not told what the lessons for this day were. On the basis of the contents of Paul's sermon Deut. 1 and Isa. 1 have been suggested. Cf. The Beginnings of Christianity, eds. F. J. Foakes-Jackson and K. Lake (London: Macmillan and Co., 1933), V, 409. In Lk. 4:17-19 we know what the prophetic lesson was since it was read by Jesus himself, and his comments were based upon it. As in the Luke passage the haftaras were usually short, being more like a text than a lesson. Cf. G. F. Moore, Judaism (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927-1930), I, 301.

the Christian hortatory language."¹ There is good evidence that "brethren" or "our brethren" was a principal method of address used by the Jewish preachers of the first three centuries of our era. Marmorstein cites,² as an example of the use of this method of address, R. Akiba who stood up on a large bench and addressed the gathering which had come to comfort him with the words, "Our brethren." The incident arises out of a discussion concerning greetings allowed to be used by a mourner.

Our Rabbis taught: A mourner is forbidden during the first three days to give greeting of [peace] ; after three and to seven [days], he responds but does not give greeting [of peace]; thereafter he gives greeting of peace and responds in his usual manner.

[It is stated above] 'Forbidden during the first three days to give greeting of peace.' But surely it was taught: It happened when [two] sons of R. Akiba [bridegrooms], died, all Israel entered and made a great lament for them, and as the people were about to depart, R. Akiba stood on a large bench and addressed them: Our brethren, bridegrooms, I am consoled on account of the honor you have done [them].³

Marmorstein⁴ also cites M Taanith 2.1 to illustrate this method of address:

How did they order the matter on the [last seven]

¹op. cit., p. 132. This method of address is not found in the Stoic-Cynic diatribe, nor would we expect to find it there, since the Greek preachers did not feel a bond of brotherhood with their audiences as did the Jewish and Christian homilists.

²"Synagogue Sermons in the First Three Centuries," op. cit., p. 238.

³TR Mo'ed Katan 21b.

⁴"Synagogue Sermons," ibid., p. 238.

days of fasting? They used to bring out the Ark into the open space in the town and put wood-ashes on the Ark and on the heads of the President and the Father of the court; and every one took [of the ashes] and put them on his head. The eldest among them uttered before them words of admonition: Brethren, it is not written of the men of Nineveh that 'God saw their sack cloth and their fasting,' but 'And God saw their works that they turned from their evil way': and in his protest the Prophet says, 'Rend your heart and not your garments.'¹

"Our brethren" was also employed as a method of address in funeral sermons. R. Jehuda bar Nahmani, speaking to a group of people in mourning over the death of the child of R. Hijja, addresses the audience, "Our brethren, suffering and distressed by this bereavement," and "Our brethren, who practice charity, and the children of those who likewise practiced charity."²

The frequent use of "our brethren" by the Jewish homilists would at least suggest the possibility that the author of the Epistle of James derived his usage of this method of address from them.³

3. Variability of Subject Matter

The Epistle of James in a very short space deals with a large number of seemingly isolated subjects. If the Epistle

¹All citations from the Mishnah are from H. Danby, The Mishnah Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes (London: Oxford University Press, 1933).

²TB Megilla 23b. Quoted by Marmorstein, "Synagogue Sermons," op. cit., p. 238.

³See below, p. 96, where another theory as to the origin of this method of address is discussed.

is in reality a collection of sermonic material used by St. James in the synagogue, the variability of subject matter is explained by assuming that the material is collected from a considerable number of sermons on different subjects. It does not follow that the collection was arbitrarily made with no thought of the needs of the readers. Their social and spiritual condition surely was taken into consideration. The value of the above hypothesis is that it helps to explain the more or less isolated nature of the material in the Epistle, and the variety of that material is paralleled by the variety found in the Jewish synagogue sermons. Zunz remarks:

The Haggadah, the purpose of which is to bring heaven down to mankind and also to elevate mankind to heaven, appears in this office as the glorifying of God and as the comfort of Israel. Hence religious truths, moral maxims, discussions concerning divine retribution, the teaching of the laws which attest Israel's nationality, pictures of its past and future greatness, scenes and legends from Jewish history, comparisons between the divine institutions and those of Israel, praises of the Holy Land, inspiring stories and comforting reflections of all kinds form the chief content of the synagogue homilies.¹

One would have to list all the themes of Jewish theology in order to include the multiplicity of subjects dealt with in the synagogue sermons. The chief subjects were the conceptions of God as Creator of heaven and earth, the Father of mankind and the great Benefactor and Judge. Of importance were the choice of Israel as the chosen people of God, the

¹Op. cit., pp. 349, 350.

merits of the fathers, the biography of the biblical personages, the severe testings of Israel and the great hopes and longings of the Messianic age. The sermon was the freest and most variable part of the synagogue service. There is no attempt either in the Mishnah or similar authorities to regulate either its contents or its methods.¹

Of special interest is the closing portion of the synagogue sermons, since they generally conclude with an eschatological passage--a prophesy of the glorious future of Israel. A typical example is to be found in a homily from the Pesikta des Rab Kahana based on the prophetical passage Isa. 61:10, "He hath clothed me with garments of salvation." After discussing the various types of robes the Holy One has put on, the homilist concludes,

But the garment which He will put upon the Messiah, this will shine far, from one end of the earth to the other; for it is said (Isa. 61:10): 'As a bridegroom decketh himself with a garland.' And the Israelites will partake of His light, and will speak: 'Blessed is the hour when the Messiah shall come! Blessed the womb out of which He shall come! Blessed his contemporaries who are eye-witnesses! Blessed the eye that is honored with a sight of him!'²

¹Moore, op. cit., I, 305.

²Pesikta, p. 213 in Wünsche's trans., quoted in W. O. E. Oesterley and G. H. Box, The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), p. 87. Cf. also the end of Piska IV and V. (In Wünsche's trans. pp. 49 and 69 respectively.) Both of these homilies have an eschatological ending, as does Leviticus Rabbah 30. 16.

It will be observed that there is a strong eschatological note in the Epistle of James and that it appears in the final chapter. Oesterley thinks that the James passage (5:7-11) is a Christian adaptation of the earlier Jewish conception of the Messianic Era.¹ It is not our purpose at this juncture to discuss in detail the eschatological teaching in the Epistle.² Suffice it to say that the presence of the passage along with its position in the Epistle is of interest in the light of the presence and position of such passages in the early synagogue sermons.

4. Alliteration

This is another feature which the Epistle of James shares with the Haggadah. I cite a personal letter written by Saul Lieberman,³ dean of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, in answer to my inquiry concerning the literary character of the Haggadah:

The Rabbis employed all the tricks and devices of the rhetors of their time in order to impress their audiences.

¹Expositor's Greek Testament, ed. W. R. Nicoll (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897-1910), IV, 465 f.

²See below, pp. 196 ff.

³According to Lieberman there is no book in either English or German which treats specifically with the literary character of the Haggadah. The only work which more or less deals with this subject is in modern Hebrew by Isaac Heineman, The Methods of the Haggadah (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1950).

Alliteration, parallelism etc. are not uncommon in the Aggada. I have called attention to the rabbinic phrase: *חִסְדָּהּ חִסְדָּהּ וְנִסְבָּהּ* 'He saw it, he coveted it, and he took it,' which reminds us of veni vidi vici.

Lieberman says there is no definite evidence that rhyme was known to the rabbis before the seventh century A. D. He mentions, however, the phrase *וַיִּרְסֵהוּ סֶלֶכָא צַדִּיקָהוּ* But this is probably accidental. "Such a phrase was to the Rabbis more of an alliteration than a rhyme."

These literary similarities between the Epistle of James and the homiletical and expository Midrashim are too numerous to be disregarded. As we have seen, it is not likely that the Epistle, as we have it, is a single synagogue sermon to which has been added an epistolary address. It rather looks like a collection of excerpts from a considerable number of synagogue sermons which have been gathered (not without a definite purpose in mind) and given an epistolary address. The basic orientation of the materials in the Epistle and their use are Semitic rather than Hellenistic.

Now the probability of a Jewish-Christian teacher of Pharisaic background and training being familiar with the literary style and form of synagogue sermons is great. By the first century A. D. the homily was a regular part of the synagogue service. This was true both in Palestine and the

¹Seder Olam Rabba, ch. 28.

Diaspora, as we learn from the New Testament¹ and Philo.² The Book of Acts records how the freedom which was afforded anyone of competence to deliver the sermon in the synagogue was used by the Apostle Paul as a means of evangelism. This freedom obtained in the synagogues of Jerusalem as well as those of the Diaspora.³ It seems unlikely that, with such a splendid opportunity as the synagogues⁴ afforded James in

¹Lk. 4:17 f.; Acts 13:15. Cf. Zunz, op. cit., ch. XX.

²Cf. De Spec. II, 62.

³M. Friedlander maintained that the freedom Paul found in the Hellenistic synagogues was not to be found in the Pharisaic ones. Synagogue und Kirche in ihren Anfängen (Berlin: Reimer, 1909), p. 213 ff. Marmorstein, however, has pointed out that there is absolutely no evidence for this differentiation. A Jew from Egypt visiting Jerusalem and worshipping in a synagogue there would find the same customs obtaining as in his own synagogue in Egypt. Marmorstein does maintain, however, a differentiation between the official part of the sermon which partly dealt with Halacha and could only be delivered by recognized teachers and the unofficial part which he identifies as the λόγος παρακλήσεως (cf. Acts 13:15) and which could be delivered by anyone. By this means he accounts for Jesus' activity in the synagogues of Palestine. "Synagogue Sermons," op. cit., p. 228. There does not, however, appear to be any evidence for this division of the sermon into an official and unofficial part. A simpler explanation of the relationship which both Paul and Jesus had to the synagogue as recorded in the New Testament is that they were recognized as being competent teachers, and the freedom of the synagogue permitted them to speak whether their utterances were orthodox or not. It is significant that in the Gospels there is no mention of Jesus ever being refused permission to teach in any synagogue. Cf. I. Abrahams, Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels, First series (Cambridge: University Press, 1907), p. 3.

⁴This would apply to both Pharisaic and Hellenistic synagogues of Jerusalem. Since the Epistle shows no signs of being a translation from Aramaic (see below p. 100), we assume it contains material delivered in one of the Hellenistic synagogues. In the Pharisaic ones the sermon would be in Aramaic.

Jerusalem to reach his own people, he would have overlooked or neglected this chance for evangelism and instruction any more than would the Apostle Paul.¹

D. Other Sources for the Literary Forms of the Epistle

The literary character of the Epistle, as we maintain, finds its basic orientation in the Jewish synagogue sermon. This does not, however, exclude the use of materials which were in common use in the Christian community. The writer of the Epistle is a Jew, but he is a Christian Jew. Thus there were available to him and employed by him literary forms which were being utilized by the early Church. The most important of these is catechesis.

Recent studies have demonstrated that in addition to a general pattern of *kyrygma*, a kind of framework for preaching to be filled out according to the demands of a particular situation, material was employed by the Church, largely of an ethical and moral nature, for the instruction of converts.

¹The assertion that there was strict separation and lack of intercourse between the Jews of the Pharisaic synagogues in Jerusalem and those of the Hellenistic ones does not meet the facts adequately. The basic difference between the two groups seems to have been linguistic, and perhaps general outlook. Their theological differences have been overstated. W. Manson's statement relative to the attitude of the Hellenistic Jews of Jerusalem toward the cultus is significant in this connection: ". . . that an animus against the cultus per se was characteristic of the Hellenistic Jews in general is too much to assume, and is disproved by the storm of indignation which Stephen's reputed blasphemy provoked in the Hellenistic synagogues in Jerusalem." The Epistle to the Hebrews (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1951), p. 30.

There certainly was a need for this kind of thing very early in the history of the Church, and the familiarity of Jewish Christians with the methods and materials used in instructing proselytes in Judaism would add to the probability of the early production of such material by the Church.¹ The spadework in this investigation of early Christian catechisms has been done, in the English language, by Bishop Carrington² and E. G. Selwyn.³ These two British scholars have shown that a broad general pattern of materials, consisting mainly of precepts and admonitions, may with great probability be taken to represent the common tradition of primitive catechesis or instruction of converts. Now this is not to say that passages such as I Thess. 5, Col. 3, parts of I Peter and James, are themselves excerpts from a primitive Christian catechism, but as C. H. Dodd has pointed out:

We should be safer in supposing that the authors of these Epistles are alluding to familiar forms of catechesis--familiar to themselves because they are constantly using them in their work, and familiar to their readers because they have received instructions along these lines on becoming members of the Church.

¹Cf. W. D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (London: S. P. C. K., 1948), pp. 121 ff. where there is an excellent discussion of the current Jewish catechetical material and in particular the so-called derek 'eretz literature.

²Op. cit.

³Op. cit., pp. 365-466. In German the groundwork in this investigation was done by A. Seeberg, Der Katechismus der Ur-Christenheit (Leipzig, 1903) and G. Klein, Der Alteste-Christliche Katechismus (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1909).

. . . It is a common traditional form or pattern we are dealing with, which individual teachers could use as a framework for instruction, filling it out at will according to the needs of the situation.¹

The Epistle of James most certainly gives evidence of this "common traditional form," as the work of Carrington and Selwyn has abundantly shown. Selwyn's classification of the catechetical materials in Romans, Colossians, Ephesians, I Peter and James, demonstrates in a special way how largely the element of catechesis looms up in this Epistle. The relevant passages in the Epistle of James which fit into Selwyn's reconstruction of a baptismal form (what he calls a "second Baptismal form")² follow:

(i) The entry into the new life at baptism.

(a) Its basis--the Word, truth, gospel.

1:18: βουληθεῖς ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς λόγῳ ἀλήθείας.

1:21: . . . δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον.

(b) Its nature--rebirth, new creation, new manhood.

1:18: ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς . . . , εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἀπαρχὴν τινὰ τῶν αὐτοῦ κτισμάτων.

1:21: διὸ ἀποθέμενοι πάσαν . . . περισσεῖαν κακίας κακίας . . . δέξασθε τὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον.

(ii) The new life: its negative implications or renunciations.

¹"Thirty Years of New Testament Study," Religion in Life, XIX (1950), 329, 330. Cf. also Gospel and Law (Cambridge: University Press, 1951), pp. 14-24.

²Op. cit., p. 388.

1:21: διὸ ἀποθέμενοι πᾶσαν ῥυπαρίαν καὶ περιστείαν κακίας ἐν πραύτητι δέξασθε τὸν ἐμφυτον λόγον τὸν δυνάμενον σῶσαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑμῶν.

(iii) The new life: its faith and worship.

1:27: ὁρησκεία καθαρὰ καὶ ἀμίαντος παρὰ τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ αὕτη ἐστίν, ἐπισκέπτεσθαι ὀρφανούς καὶ χήρας ἐν τῇ θλίψει αὐτῶν, ἄσπιλον ἑαυτὸν τηρεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου.

(iv) The new life: its social virtues and duties.

(a) In general.

5:7, 8: μακροθυμήσατε οὖν, ἀδελφοί, ἕως τῆς παρουσίας τοῦ κυρίου . . . μακροθυμήσατε καὶ ὑμεῖς, στηρίξατε, τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, ὅτι ἡ παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου ἤγγικεν.

2:8: . . . νόμον . . . βασιλικόν, κατὰ τὴν γραφὴν,
. . .

(b) In particular relationships.

Duty of humility. 4:6: ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν.

Humility and obedience to God. 4:7: ὑποτάχτε οὖν τῷ θεῷ, 4:10: ταπεινώθητε ἐνώπιον κυρίου, καὶ ὑψώσει ἡμᾶς.

It should be noted that on every main point of this reconstructed catechetical form there is a relevant passage in the Epistle of James.

Selwyn also found, as part of the New Testament catechetical material, what he calls "teaching called out by crises: traces of a persecution-form."¹ Due to the vigorous attacks which were leveled at the Church at an early date, there was an especially urgent need for this kind of material in the first

¹Ibid., p. 442.

Christian communities. Teaching regarding persecution probably had constituted part of the apostolic instruction and

such teaching would have been prepared and made available at an early date. I believe that this pattern is discernable in these epistles [I and II Thess. and I Peter] as well as in St. James and elsewhere, and that it accounts for much that is common to them: it rested moreover, upon undoubted verba Christi.¹

In the Epistle of James there are five passages which deal with the subject of persecution: (1) 1:2: πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἡγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσῃτε ποικίλοις which has a striking parallel in I Peter 1:6: ἐν ᾧ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, ὀλίγον ἄρτι, εἰ δέον ἐστι, λυπηθέντες ἐν ποικίλοις πειρασμοῖς. A similar sentiment is expressed in I Thess. 1:6; cf. also Matt. 5:10-12. This section of the persecution form emphasized rejoicing in persecution. (2) 1:3: γινώσκοντες ὅτι τὸ δοκίμιον ἡμῶν τῆς πίστεως κατεργάζεται ὑπομονήν which has parallels in I Thess. 2:4; I Peter 1:7; cf. also Mk. 13:13 and Matt. 10:22. Here the common emphasis is on trial as a character tester. (3) 1:12: μακάριος ἄνθρωπος ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν· ὅτι δοκιμος γεόμενος λήμψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς, ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν. The parallels to this passage are II Thess. 1:7; I Peter 5:4; cf. Matt. 5:12. In these passages the common teaching is the reward for steadfastness in trial which is usually associated with the day of the appearing of Jesus Christ. (4) 4:7: ὑποτάγητε οὖν τῷ Θεῷ, ἀντίστητε δὲ τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ

¹Selwyn, ibid., p. 450.

φεύξετα ἀφ' ὑμῶν. The teaching here is the responsibility to stand firm against the powers of evil and has parallels in I Peter 5:8, 9 and Eph. 6:11. (5) 5:8: στηρίξατε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, ὅτι παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου ἤγγικεν. This passage, which has parallels in I Thess. 5:1, 2; I Peter 1:10, 11; 2:12; 4:7; II Peter 3:10, etc., has as its main thought the nearness of the advent which in James is associated with the injunction to establish their hearts.

Selwyn's reconstruction of the persecution-form has eight sections, and in five of these there is material from the Epistle of James--an indication of the importance of this subject in the Epistle. Only the Thessalonian epistles and I Peter deal more in detail with the problem of persecution, which was of such primary concern in the early Church.

The work of Selwyn leaves no doubt that there is common catechetical material which underlies many of the Epistles of the New Testament.¹ Since a good share of this material is to be found in the Epistle of James, it has, to some degree at least, affected its literary character. Selwyn thinks that the use of ἀδελφοί with or without a verb of injunction (παρεκαλῶ, ἐρωτῶ) and a resumptive particle may have been a standard

¹C. L. Mitton in his splendid new work on Ephesians does not follow Selwyn. He is not willing to concede that catechetical codes were in existence as early as A. D. 60. The similarity of these codes to Paul's letters is explained by the conjecture that the letters helped to shape the codes. The Epistle to the Ephesians (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), p. 178 f.

means of introducing catechetical material.¹ In the Epistle of James the vocative ἀδελφοί introduces catechetical material in 1:2-4, 18, 19, 21; 5:7. Also the high frequency of imperatives (there are about fifty four in the Epistle) may be due to the presence of this material.

There were still other sources available to the author of the Epistle which, in all probability, had an influence on his literary style. The most important of these were the verba Christi.² The early catechetical forms undoubtedly drew from these collections of the verba Christi, and James seems to have had contact with this tradition which was still in a plastic form. Perhaps the author's aphoristic style is attributable in part to the influence of the verba Christi.

Summary.--The Epistle of James derives its literary character chiefly from the synagogue sermon. Its dialogue character, varied contents, including the eschatological conclusion, method of address, and use of alliteration reflect the method and literary character of the early homiletical Midrashim, the best extant example of which we have in the Pesikta des Rab Kahana. The Epistle is not, in all probability, a single synagogue sermon, but ⁶exerpts from several which were preached in the Greek-speaking synagogues in Jerusalem. In

¹Op. cit., p. 388. See above, pp. 82 ff., where it is shown that this method of address is also typical in synagogue sermons.

²See above, p. 95.

addition to reflecting the method of synagogue sermon construction, the author reveals contact with methods and materials which were being used in the early Church. As head of the Church of Jerusalem these methods and materials were easily accessible to him. The most important of these were catechesis and the verba Christi. His use of these materials has affected his literary style, e. g., the frequency of imperative (derived primarily from catechesis), which surpasses anything in the homiletical Midrashim, and the aphoristic type of statement (derived both from catechesis and the verba Christi).

E. Appended Note: The Hellenistic Thought of the Epistle

The above discussion of the literary character of the Epistle of James has not taken into account the Hellenistic turn of expression and thought which we find in the Epistle and which compelled Ropes and others to look for its literary genre in a Hellenistic and not a Jewish milieu. If the Epistle of James finds its literary orientation in Jewish literature, how is one to account for the Hellenistic thought in the Epistle?

Any satisfactory answer to this question must consider:

- (1) the extent to which the Epistle reveals Hellenistic thought;
- (2) how much contact one who was customarily a participant in the worship of a Jewish synagogue of the Pharisaic type would have with Hellenistic thought in general, and, if possible, the particular kind of Greek thought revealed in the Epistle.

The Hellenistic element in the Epistle of James has been greatly exaggerated. H. A. A. Kennedy speaks of the "Hellenistic atmosphere" of the Epistle which, by inference at least, suggests a preponderance of Greek thought in the Epistle.¹ It is true that through his knowledge of the Greek language the author of the Epistle could well have come into contact with the Greek world of ideas. The Epistle gives expression to this contact, but that is quite different from saying that the Epistle reveals a "Hellenistic atmosphere." Hauck has pointed out that these contacts with Greek thought in the Epistle reveal rather a basic Semitic atmosphere. In a fine passage he says:

. . . jene hellenistisch gefärbten Stücke sind Umhang nicht Herzstück seines allgemeinen Bildungsbestandes. Es handelt sich nicht im mindesten darum, dass griechischer Geist irgendwie erheblich das Schreiben durchströmt. Wie wenig solche griechische Bildungsstücke seine Wesensgrundlage und seine ursprüngliche Bildung in eine andre Bahn treiben, zeigt sich gerade an der Art, wie er die Diatribe handhabt. Ihre stilistische Weise ist ihm nicht ganz unbekannt und er macht einige Ansätze sie nachzuahmen (bes. 2:14-20, auch 3:2-12), aber die semitische Weise liegt ihm so im Blut, dass er immer wieder in diese zurückfällt. Immer wieder bestimmt nicht das logische Fortschreiten der Gedanken bei ihm die Darstellung, sondern in Satz und Gegensatz werden die Dinge parallel nebeneinander hingestellt, so wie es semitischem Denken besonders entspricht.²

¹Op. cit., pp. 37-52.

²Op. cit., pp. 19 f.

A discussion of the two passages of the Epistle which, it is generally conceded, reveal most strikingly contact with Hellenistic thought follows:

(1) Jas. 3:6: καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα πῦρ, ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας, ἡ γλῶσσα καθίσταται ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν, ἡ σπιλουῖσα ὅλον τὸ σῶμα καὶ φλογίζουσα τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως καὶ φλογιζομένη ὑπὸ τῆς γέννης. Our chief concern is with the statement καὶ φλογίζουσα τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως, which Hort says, is "one of the hardest phrases in the Bible."¹ This difficulty is twofold: it involves the precise meaning of the phrase² and its origin.

Kennedy has pointed out that here and in 1:32²³ we have the only occurrence of the noun γένεσις in the New Testament with the exception of its use in the nativity narratives of Matthew and Luke.³ In the latter passages it means "birth"

¹Op. cit., p. 72. Rendall, after a discussion of attempts at deriving the meaning of the phrase from Orphic, neo-Platonic, or Pythagorean thought, and rejecting Hort's suggestion of a connection with the wheels of Ezekiel's vision, almost despairs. But not quite! He suggests ὀπὸν for τροχόν. "The meaning would then be that the tongue, like a fire igniting a mass of wood, sets on fire and burns up all the vital juices that contribute to the making of man, and along the charred embers play the flickering flames of Gehenna." Op. cit., pp. 60 f. This is a good example of the desperation experienced by commentators over the meaning of this passage.

²The early translators of the New Testament had difficulty with this phrase as is revealed by a comparison of their renderings: vg rotam nativitatis nostrae; ff rotam nativitat; m rotam geniturae; sah "the wheel of birth"; boh "the wheel of birth"; syr "the successions of our generations which run like wheels."

³Op. cit., p. 40.

or "origin," the meaning which it usually has in the LXX. In this passage, however, it has another meaning. Here the sense is "natural life," "nature," "creation."

The meaning of τροχός is more difficult. Since the most obvious thing about a wheel is that it turns and thus changes position, it was used by the Greeks as a symbol of human life, the chief point being that of fate which is subject to sudden changes.¹ G. Kittel has shown that the rabbis used the symbol of the wheel in a similar way.² To them it indicated the round of human life and fortune. This is not, however, how τροχός is used in the Epistle of James. In the Epistle it seems rather to be a symbol of inclusiveness and to have nothing to do with the round of human life and fortune. The phrase is not native to Palestine but was brought in from the outside, in all probability from the East.

ὁ τροχὸς τῆς γενέσεως is also found in Orphic and Pythagorean philosophy where it is used of the transmigration of souls from death back to life again.³ Here the idea of the

¹The best known passage: κοινὰ παθὴ πάντων, ὁ βίος τροχός, ἄστατος ὄλβος Phocylides 27, quoted by Büchsel, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, (hrsg. von G. Kittel; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1932--), I, 682. Cf. Herodotus I, 207: εἰ δ' ἐγνώκας ὅτι ἄνθρωπος καὶ σὺ εἷς καὶ ἑτέρων τοιῶνδε ἄρχεις, ἐκεῖνο πρῶτον μάθε, ὡς κύκλος ἀνθρωπείων ἐστὶ πρηγμάτων περιφερόμενος δὲ οὐκ ἔῃ αἰεὶ τοὺς αὐτοὺς εὐτυχέειν.

²*Die Probleme des palästinischen Spätjudentums und das Urchristentum* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1926), pp. 140-168.

³Simplicius on Aristotle *De Caelo* II, I, p. 91 (Berlin ed. to the Scholia of Aristotle vol. VII, p. 377) cited in

circular motion of the wheel is evident. The phrase apparently became a technical designation (along with ὁ κυκλὸς τῆς γενέσεως) for this unending cycle of life, death and re-birth. But even in Orphism the term is a borrowed one. Its origin points to India where the wheel was one of the oldest symbols of Buddhism to express the idea of constant "becoming."¹ The use of the phrase in the Epistle of James is far removed from this Orphic and Pythagorean idea. Ropes has well remarked:

To think of the tongue as enflaming the "wheel" of metempsychosis is nonsense; and, on the other side, nothing could be more opposed to James' robust doctrine of moral responsibility than the idea of a fatalistic circle.²

In the Epistle, as stated above, τροχός seems to be a symbol of inclusiveness. A similar usage is to be found in Plato *Critias* 113d where Jowett translates τροχοί "zones."³ The LXX of *Psa.* 77:18 uses τροχός to translate "galgal," the

Windisch, *op. cit.*, p. 23. (Ἰξίωνα) ἐνδεθῆναι δὲ . . . ἐν τῷ τῆς εἰμαρμένης τε καὶ γενέσεως τροχῷ οὐπὲρ ἀδύνατον ἀπ' ἀλλαγῆναι κατὰ τὸν Ὀρφέα. Cf. Proclus *In Tim.* V. 330.

¹Kittel, *Die Probleme des palästinischen Spätjudentums*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

²*Op. cit.*, p. 239. Philo *De Somn.* II, 44, speaks of the cycle and wheel of unending necessity (κύκλον καὶ τροχὸν ἀνάγκης ἀτελευτήτου) which seems to show some connection with the Orphic use of the term.

³The *Dialogues of Plato* (New York: Random House, 1937), II, 77. In this passage Plato is speaking of the love affair which Poseidon had with the mortal woman Cleito. αὐτῆς δὲ εἰς ἐπιθυμίαν Ποσειδῶν ἐλθὼν συμμείγνυται καὶ τὸ γήλοφον, ἐν ᾧ κατῴκιστο, ποιῶν εὐρεσκή περιρρήγνυσιν κύκλῳ θαλάττης γῆς τε ἐναλλὰξ ἐλάττους μείζους τε περὶ ἀλλήλους ποιῶν τροχούς. Cf. Plutarch *Lucian* xxxix.

rabbinic word for the celestial sphere.¹ This usage is close to what we have in the Epistle, "sphere" being used in the sense of inclusiveness.² We find a passage on the tongue in TB Berakoth 15b which depicts its all-pervading activity.

Life and death are in the hand of the tongue. Has the tongue a hand? No, but as the hand kills, so the tongue. The hand kills only at close quarters: the tongue is called an arrow as killing at a distance. An arrow kills at forty or fifty paces: but of the tongue it is said (Psa. 63:9) "they have set their mouth in heaven and their tongue goeth through the earth." It ranges over the whole earth and reaches to heaven.³

This is the idea conveyed in the passage in James. The tongue sets on fire all that is included in nature.⁴ Just where the author of the Epistle got this expression it is difficult to say.⁵ It is improbable that he derived it directly

¹Cf. Mayor, op. cit., p. 117.

²Bieder, following Schlatter, sees in τροχὸς τῆς γενέσεως an eschatological reference. The rabbis thought that the sun would shine so brightly on the day of judgment that the wicked would die. τροχὸς τῆς γενέσεως is the rabbinic galgal hatta= Sonnenkugel, Sonnenrad. According to James, the end of the world is hastened by sins of the tongue. Op. cit., p. 109.

³Quoted in Mayor, ibid., p. 115.

⁴F. J. Phillips apparently takes the phrase to mean this. He translates, "it can make the whole of life a blazing hell." Letters to Young Churches (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), p. 89.

⁵W. L. Knox thinks that in the light of Pss. Sol. 12: 2, 3, the metaphor of Jas. 3:6 becomes possible. The passage in the Psalms goes: ἐν ποικιλίᾳ στροφῆς οἱ λόγοι τῆς γλώσσης ἀνδρὸς πονηροῦ· ὥσπερ ἐν λαῶ πῦρ ἀναπτον καλλονὴν αὐτοῦ ἢ παροιμία αὐτοῦ, . . . ἔκκοψαι δένδρα εὐφροσύνης φλογιζούσης παρανόμους. "Although the passage in the Psalms is corrupt, it seems clear that it contains the curious conception of the

from Greek literature, although the Greek world of ideas was by no means shut out from him. Perhaps, as Hauck suggests, he uses the phrase "weil er etwas Grosses, Umfassendes bezeichnet."¹ At any rate, it does not necessarily reveal intimate or direct contact with Hellenistic thought.²

(2) Jas. 1:17: *πάσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δῶρημα τέλειον κτλ.* The first part of this verse is an hexameter: *πάσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δῶρημα τέλειον*, but is an imperfect one since the second syllable of *δόσις* is reckoned long when in reality it is short.³ Moffatt suggests that it is a quotation taken from some popular Hellenistic source.⁴ However, there are other possible explanations. The hexameter could have been an accident, or the author may have constructed

tongue of the wicked man as a devouring fire, which sets fire to its surroundings (the last clause is unintelligible, but should imply the setting on fire, i. e., the destruction not of the *παράνομοι* but of their neighbors.)" St. Paul and the Church of Jerusalem, op. cit., p. 91. In a later article, however, he describes the phrase, *ὁ τροχὸς τῆς γενέσεως* as a "purely hellenistic idea" and cites as its closest parallel Corp. Herm. xvi. 8 (Scott, I, 266) where the sun is described as *ἡλιοποιῶν καὶ ἀνεκινῶν γενεσιν, καὶ μεταβολαῖς τὰ ἐν τούτοις τοῖς μέρεσιν τοῦ κόσμου ἡψῶ ἀλίκος τρόπον μεταποιῶν*. "The Epistle of James," op. cit., p. 15.

¹op. cit., p. 164.

²Schrammberger, op. cit., pp. 67 f. finds in the phrase a reference to Gnosticism, but his explanation is far-fetched.

³Some have proposed to correct the faulty hexameter by inserting τ' after *δόσις*. But there is absolutely no textual evidence for this insertion.

⁴J. Moffatt, The Epistle of James, op. cit., p. 19. Cf. Mayor, op. cit., p. 57. Spitta, op. cit., p. 40, thinks the phrase has its origin in the Sybilline Oracles.

the line deliberately. His ability in the Greek language would not preclude his drifting into meter.

It has been suggested that the phrase could possibly reflect a "side allusion to fatalism . . . as the prevalent astrology ascribed the destinies of men to the influences of the stars."¹ But it is not necessary to look so far afield for the source of this idea. τὰ φῶτα must refer here to heavenly bodies. Both Psa. 136:7, τῷ ποιήσαντι φῶτα μεγάλα μόνη, ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ, and Jer. 4:23, ἔβλεψα ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ ἰδοὺ οὐθέν, καὶ εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, καὶ οὐκ ἦν τὰ φῶτα αὐτοῦ illustrate this usage of τὰ φῶτα. The expression "father of lights" was not completely unknown in Jewish circles. Strack-Billerbeck² quote the Apocalypse of Moses c. 35, "And Seth says to her, They have not lost their light; but they are not able to shine in the presence of the Light of All, the Father of Lights, . . ." Also in c. 38 we come across the same expression: "The arch-angel Michael asked the Father of Lights . . ."³

There is an even closer connection which this phrase has with Jewish thought. The praise to God which prefaced the daily Shema goes: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, creator of the luminaries." So in the light of these parallels from Jewish

¹Moffatt, The Epistle of James, op. cit., p. 19.

²Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1926), III, 752.

³Strack-Billerbeck, ibid.

sources it is not necessary to look for the origin of this phrase outside of the Jewish circle of ideas.

παράλλαξις and τροπή have been identified by some commentators to be termini technichi of astronomy; παράλλαξις, no doubt, because of its resemblance to παράλλαξ, our "parallax," a technical astronomical term. However, παράλλαξις, although used by the astronomers,¹ is never used in a technical sense. It has the same meaning for them as it has for the author of the Epistle of James, who is the only writer in the New Testament to use the word. τροπή, another New Testament hapax legomenon, is understood by Spitta to refer to the path, spoken of in Enoch 72:3-5, taken by the heavenly luminaries after they go down in the west, in returning through the north to reach the east again.² It is doubtful that James has this range of ideas in his mind here. In the LXX and Wisdom has the technical meaning "solstices," whereas in the Epistle

¹For references cf. Mayor, op. cit., p. 60.

²The passage in Enoch runs as follows: "And I saw six portals in which the sun rises, and six portals in which the sun sets: and the moon rises and sets in these portals, and the leaders of the stars and those whom they lead: six in the east and six in the west and all following each other in accurately corresponding order: also many windows to the right and the left of these portals. And first there goes forth the great luminary, named the Sun, and his circumference is like the circumference of the heaven, and he is quite filled with illuminating and heating fire. The chariot on which he ascends, the wind drives, and the sun goes down from the heaven and returns through the north in order to reach the east, and is so guided that it comes to the appropriate (lit. 'that') portal and shines in the face of heaven." R. H. Charles, op. cit., II, 239, 240. Cf. Enoch 72:35; 41:8.

of James the word is used in its general sense of "change." It is in this sense that Philo uses the word in Leg. Alleg. II, 33: "The whole of created being must necessarily change (τρέπεσθαι), for this is its property, even as unchangeableness (τὸ ἄτρεπον εἶναι) belongs to God."¹

The two passages considered above unquestionably reveal some contact, whether direct or indirect, with Greek thought and culture, but they do not warrant our speaking of the "Hellenistic atmosphere of the Epistle of James." Now the next question, which is of particular pertinence to our thesis, is to what degree might we expect to find, in a work which finds its basic literary orientation in a Jewish Palestinian literary form, acquaintance with Hellenistic thought?

That Greek ideas had infiltrated Palestine to a considerable degree in the first Christian centuries has been shown by the researches of Daube,² Lieberman,³ Bentwich,⁴ Baeck⁵

¹Quoted by H. A. A. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 42.

²"Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric," Hebrew Union College Annual, XXII (1949), 239-264.

³Greek in Jewish Palestine, (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1942) and Hellenism in Jewish Palestine, Vol. XVIII of Texts and Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950).

⁴Hellenism (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1943), pp. 85-125; 250-296.

⁵Baeck says that the Palestinian rabbis were acquainted with Greek philosophy through Philo. He cites Bereshith Rabbah 44.14: "The Bible says that God led out Abraham. This should

and others.¹ The convictions of the Jews of Palestine as well as those of Alexandria were being challenged by this great influx of Greek ideas. Bentwich speaks of Judea as "a rock around which there beat the waves of the Hellenistic sea."²

This "Hellenistic sea" even overcame the resistance of Judea as is revealed by the rabbinical writings.³ The testimony of R. Simeon is in point here. He says, "There were a thousand young men in my father's house, five hundred of whom studied the Law, while the other five hundred studied Greek wisdom."⁴ It is true that the Babylonian Talmud seems to place

be interpreted in the following way: God led Abraham up above the vault of heaven where the Lord dwells so that beneath his feet he beheld the path of the stars, the ways and the laws that had been laid down from the beginning." Now Baeck thinks this statement shows remarkable affinities with Plato's Phaedrus 246, 247 where Plato describes the ascent of the immortals, at the moment they "know." "The Jewish preacher used the Platonic allegory to describe, in the language of the Bible, what he held to be the most sublime of all experiences, the prophetic revelation." The Pharisees and Other Essays (New York: Schocken Books, 1947), p. 116.

¹E. Shürer, A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, trans. J. Macpherson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1886-1900), II, I, 29-51; P. Wendland, op. cit., pp. 187-247, and W. L. Knox, St. Paul and the Church of the Gentiles (Cambridge: University Press, 1939), pp. 27-54. Also the first chapter of W. D. Davies, op. cit., treats of this subject.

²Op. cit., p. 85.

³Davies says that there was a Graeco-Jewish atmosphere even in the city of Jerusalem itself, and that the cautious attitude towards Hellenism which was later assumed by the Jews was not as evident before 70 A. D. Op. cit., p. 8.

⁴TB Sota 49b. Cited by W. L. Knox, who says that the number mentioned is ludicrous, "But there is no reason to doubt that the rabbis of the first century A. D. were alive to the

a ban on the study of Greek wisdom,¹ but Lieberman has pointed out that this study was not forbidden per se, but only because it led to the neglect of the Torah.² He finds no rabbinical source which forbids the study of Greek wisdom.³

Daube has shown that rabbinic methods of interpretation derive largely from Hellenistic rhetoric. Hillel, in particular, who flourished about 30 B. C., was influenced by Hellenistic thought.

. . . his theory of the relation between statute law and tradition was entirely in line with the prevalent Hellenistic ideas on the matter. The same is true of the details of execution, of the methods he proposes to give practical effect to his theory. The famous seven norms of hermeneutics he proclaimed, the seven norms in accordance with which Scripture was to be interpreted, hitherto looked upon as the most typical product of Rabbinism, all of them betray the rhetorical teaching of his day.⁴

need of such a dual curriculum." Some Hellenistic Elements in Primitive Christianity (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 30.

¹TB Menahoth 99b. "Ben Dama the son of R. Ishmael's sister asked R. Ishmael: Is a man like myself who has mastered the whole Torah allowed to study Greek wisdom? R. Ishmael applied the verse in Joshua (1:8) to him: . . . 'Thou shalt meditate therein (i. e. in the Torah) day and night,' go and find a time when it is neither day nor night and study Greek wisdom." Lieberman, Hellenism in Jewish Palestine, op. cit., p. 100.

²Ibid.

³Lieberman does, however, mention an injunction regarding the teaching of children the Greek language. During the time of Quietus this injunction was made general, but it involved only instruction, not study. Ibid., pp. 101 f.

⁴Daube, "Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation," op. cit., p. 251.

Nor were the rabbis ignorant of the popular natural science of the Hellenistic world.¹ Many of their ideas concerning botany, zoology and medicine were those commonly held by the people of the Mediterranean world, the Greeks in particular. Their classification of plants, certain ideas which they held about the generation of animals,² when to break oxen and to mate asses, and remedies for certain ills were derived from a common stock of Hellenistic knowledge.

The Jewish rabbis were also acquainted with Greek philosophy. Hillel is a case in point. He represented what was best in the Pharisaic tradition, yet he displays some contact with Hellenistic philosophy. His school and that of Shammai debated at length the question whether it was better for a man to be born or not to be born,³ a well-known subject of Greek controversy. The doctrine of the pre-natal life of the soul is found in the Midrash.⁴ It probably came into Palestine from

¹See Lieberman, Hellenism in Jewish Palestine, op. cit., pp. 180-193.

²Lieberman cites a very interesting example from M Hulin 9.6: "If a man touches the flesh of a mouse which is half flesh and half earth he becomes unclean; but if he touches the earth he remains clean." This he compares to the report in Pliny Nat. Hist. ix. 84, 179: "But the inundation of the Nile gives credit to all these things by a marvel that surpasses them all. For when it subsides little mice are found with the work of generative water and earth uncompleted: in one part of their body they are already alive, while the most recently formed part of their structure is still of earth." The similarity is striking.

³TB Erubin 13b; cf. Exodus Rabbah 48.

⁴Bereshith Rabbah 14. Cf. Enoch 4:4.

the Platonic and neo-Pythagorean tradition by way of Alexandria. Also, the doctrine of the creation of the world by means of wisdom is mentioned in the Palestinian tradition.¹ Many other examples of Greek ideas in the rabbinical writings could be cited.² Lieberman's conclusion with reference to the interaction of Palestinian Jews with the thought-world around them is noteworthy: "The Jews of Palestine were by no means isolated from the ancient Mediterranean civilized world. They shared many of its general beliefs, conceptions and patterns of behavior."³ Indeed, it would have been quite impossible for the Palestinian Jews to hold out against the pressures on every side to Hellenize them. They might prevent the infiltration of Greek thought and culture for a time, but ultimately they had to succumb.

This inquiry into the Greek thought and ideas in the rabbinical writings has special relevance to our investigation of the literary character of the Epistle of James. If Greek thought was so wide spread in Palestine as to invade the rabbinical writings, it is not strange to find Greek literary forms and turns of expression in a writing which, as we suppose, orig-

¹Targum Yerushalmi interprets Gen. 1:1: "With wisdom God created the world." Quoted in Bentwich, op. cit., p. 261.

²Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., IV, 405. J. Bonsirven, Le Judaïsme Palestinien au temps de Jésus-Christ (Bibliothèque de théologie historique; Paris: G. Beauchesne et ses fils, 1934, 35), I, 163 ff., shows that the rabbis knew the four basic elements of Greek philosophy.

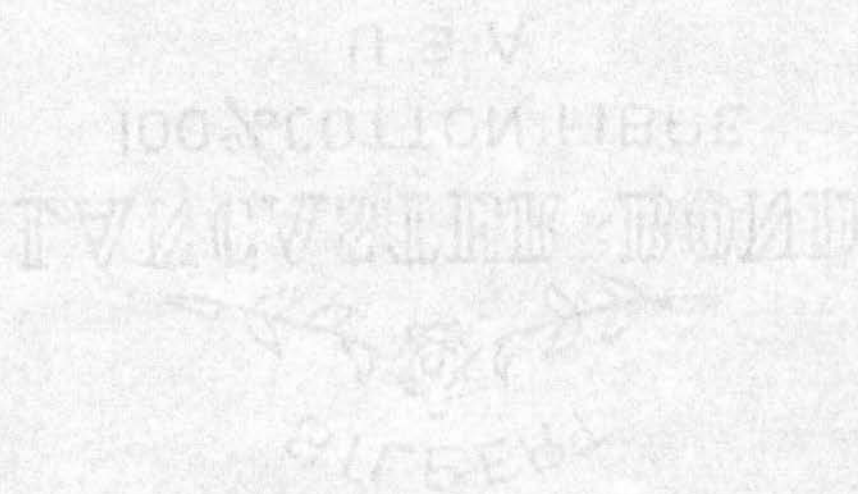
³op. cit., p. 19.

inated on Palestinian soil and was written by one of Pharisaic background. The Greek ideas, forms and expressions can readily be accounted for either as being mediated by the rabbis themselves, or more directly through Philo.¹ Also, the Jews of Jerusalem were afforded special opportunity to pick up bits of current philosophical thought through their contact with the Jews of the Dispersion² and the itinerant Greek preachers and orators which were everywhere to be found in the Mediterranean world. By whatever means, it is neither impossible nor improbable that a work which originates on Palestinian soil and finds its basic orientation in the Jewish synagogue sermon, would contain Greek thought and expression to the degree we find them in the Epistle of James.³

¹It is of interest that the two teachers of Hillel, Shemaiah and Abtalion were reputed to be proselytes and were either natives of Alexandria, or at least studied and taught there for a long time. This would indicate a direct connection between Alexandria and the rabbis. Cf. Daube, op. cit., pp. 240-241.

²W. D. Davies says that there was "a considerable reciprocal interchange of thought between the Judaism of Palestine and that of the Diaspora." Op. cit., p. 8.

³Of course this is not the only alternative. James' sermon material could have been edited and worked over by a Hellenist. H. G. Meechan suggests as a possibility a Hellenistic student of Philo. Op. cit., p. 183.



CHAPTER IV

LANGUAGE

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The facility of the author of the Epistle of James in the Greek language has often been noted.¹ His Greek ranks with the best to be found in the New Testament.² This is not, however, to say he is a classicist. There are only three periodic sentences in the Epistle (2:2-4; 2:15, 16; 4:13-15), and only two of these exceed four lines. The use of Greek particles is very sparce,³ and although participles are numerous there is

¹"The Epistle of James is from the beginning a little work of literature." A. Deissman, Light from the Ancient East, op. cit., p. 235. "In the skilful use of the Greek language its [Epistle of James'] author is inferior to no N. T. writer." J. H. Thayer, "The Language of the New Testament," A Dictionary of the Bible, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1898-1904), III, 42. "On the whole I should be inclined to rate the Greek of this Epistle as approaching more nearly to the standard of classical purity than that of any other book of the N. T. with the exception perhaps of the Epistle to the Hebrews." J. Mayor, op. cit., p. ccxlv.

²On the problem of James, the Lord's brother, writing such good Greek, see below, pp. 128 ff.

³The common Greek particles ἐπεὶ, ἄρα, ὥστε do not occur at all in the Epistle. εἰάν occurs only once (4:4). (The Textus Receptus reads ἄν in 3:4 and there is a variant reading which includes ἄν in 5:7.) ἵνα is used only twice (1:4; 4:3) and μέν only once (not followed by δέ) in 3:17. In addition, there is the difficult use of μέντοι in 2:8. The commonest usage of this particle is adversative. It seems difficult, if not impossible, to take it in this sense here. The best translation of it in this context is "indeed," "really," which makes it little more than a strengthened μέν. Cf. Hort, op. cit., p. 62.

not a single instance of a genitive absolute. No optative occurs in the Epistle, and the accusative with the infinitive is not to be found. Nevertheless, in spite of these limitations,¹ the author is obviously at home in the Greek language, a fact which is abundantly revealed by both the vocabulary and style of the Epistle.

A. Vocabulary

There are 570 different words in the Epistle of James. Of these about seventy (this figure varies according to decisions made on variant readings) do not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. All but twenty-five of the seventy occur in the Greek Old Testament. Only six words in the Epistle (βρύω, ἐνάλιος, εὐπειθής, εὐφήμερος, θρῆσκος, κατήφεια) are not found either in the New Testament or the LXX.

The author uses words and phrases in good literary koine style, e. g., δειλεάζομαι (1:14), ἀποκυέω (1:15, 18), ἐπιτήδεια τοῦ σώματος (2:16), κρί (3:10), and κατήφεια (4:9). He seems to be fond of compounds, e. g., ἀδιάκριτος, χρυσοδακτύλιος, προσωποληψία, etc., and picturesque words, e. g., ὀλολύζω, δειλεάζομαι, δίψυχος; he employs technical terms, e. g., πηδάλιον,

¹A. T. Robertson observes the lack of "studied rhetoric or keen dialectics." A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (3d ed.; New York: George H. Doran, 1919), p. 123. Cf. B. Weiss' criticisms of James' Greek, Der Jakobusbrief und die neuere Kritik (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1904), pp. 44, 45.

ψυχικός, and phrases, τροχὸς τῆς γενέσεως and ἔμφυτος λόγος without using them in their strict technical sense.

Deissmann says that "the Epistle of James will be best understood in the open air beside the piled sheaves of a harvest field."¹ Its vocabulary reflects the local colour of the country-side. There are numerous words in the Epistle which are used in connection with agriculture, e. g., ἀμάω, ἄμπελος, βρέχω, βρύω, γεωργός, ἐλαία, μεραίνω, ὄψιμος, πρόϊμος, σήπω, σῦκον, συκῇ. Also, the author employs technical words used in connection with fishing, such as ἀλυκόν, ἀνεμίζω, ἐνάλιος, ἐξέλκω and ῥιπίζω. The metaphors and similes determine to a considerable degree the vocabulary used in the Epistle.

An outstanding feature of the Epistle is the rare words which are employed. The following words have their first known occurrence (assuming the precedence of the Epistle to Hermas, Clement, and the Pauline epistles) in James.

1:6 ἀνεμίζω. Moulton and Milligan can show no occurrence of this word in the papyri. It apparently stands for the classical ἀνεμόω.

1:8; 4:8 δίψυχος. This word is not found in secular literature before nor after James and does not occur in the LXX. In the New Testament it only occurs in the Epistle of James. It appears quite frequently along with the verb διψυκέω in early Christian literature. Cf. Herm. Mand. IX and Clem. Rom. 11:2; 23:3.

¹Op. cit., p. 232.

1:13 ἀπείραστος. It occurs neither in the LXX nor elsewhere in the New Testament. The classical form is ἀπείρητος or ἀπείρατος. Clement of Alexandria uses it similarly to the author of the Epistle of James in Strom. VII, 47 (ed. Hort and Mayor, p. 78) αὐστηρὸς οὗτος ἡμῖν, αὐστηρὸς οὐκ εἰς τὸ ἀδιάφθορον μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὸ ἀπείραστον. Cf. Strom. VII, 70 (p. 122). For other examples of the use of ἀπείραστος in later writers see Mayor ad loc.

1:17 ἀποσκίασμα. ἀποσκιασμός occurs in Plut. Perich. 7 where it is used of shadows thrown on the sun dial, but the form is first used here. The verb ἀποσκιάζω is used by Plato Rep. vii. 532c.

1:21 ῥυπαρία. Moulton and Milligan¹ cite Pelagie-Legenden p. 6.30 as an example of the use of ῥυπαρία in its moral sense: ἀφῆκεν ἐν τῷ ὕδατι πᾶσαν αὐτῆς τὴν ῥυπαρίαν. The reference here is to baptism. The word is used in a different sense by Plut. Mor. p. 60D.

1:26; 3:2 καλιναγωγέω. A very rare word. Lucian uses the word very much like James in Tyrannicida 4, τὰς τῶν ἡδονῶν ὀρέξεις καλιναγωγούσης. Cf. also De Salat. 70 and Herm. Mand. XII, 1: ἐνδευμένος τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν τὴν ἀγαθὴν μισήσεις τὴν πονηρὰν ἐπιθυμίαν καὶ καλιναγωγῆσεις αὐτήν.

1:26 θρησκός. Another very rare word. θρησκός does not occur anywhere in Greek literature except in Theognostus,

¹VGT, op. cit., p. 565.

a grammarian of the ninth century A. D. *θρησκεία* is the most common derivative.

2:1 *προσωποληψία*. Paul uses this word in Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9 and Col. 3:25. *προσωποληψία* or the verb form *προσωπολημπτεῖν* (Jas. 2:9) are not found in the LXX. Moulton and Milligan say that these words

may be reckoned among the earliest definitely Christian words. They belong to Palestinian Greek, being derived from *πρόσωπον λαμβάνειν*, the Hebraistic *לָפַיִן* *לָפַיִן*, "lift the face" on a person, the sense of being favorable to him, and hence, as always in the N. T., to "show undue favor or partiality."¹

2:2 *χρυσόδακτύλιος*. Rendall says this word is "a happy accident, worthy of Lucian."² But it is hardly an accident since it is correctly formed after the pattern of such words as *χρυσόχειρ*, *χρυσοστέφανος*, *χρυσοχάλινος*, etc. It looks rather like a deliberate coinage. Lucian has a similar use of *χρυσόχειρ* in *Tim.* 20. Cf. Epictetus I, 22, 18, *ἥξει τις γέρων πολὺς χρυσοῦς δακτύλιους ἔχων πολλούς*. *χρυσόδακτύλιος* is only found in the Epistle of James.

2:13 *ἀνέλεος*. The Textus Receptus reads *ἀνίλεως*, but the great weight of MSS evidence is for *ἀνέλεος*. Mayor can find the only other occurrences of either in *Test. Abr.* 12 (*ἀνίλεως*) and 16 (*ἀνέλεος*).³ Liddell and Scott cite an occur-

¹Ibid., p. 553. Cf. Lightfoot's note on Gal. 2:6, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (5 ed.; London: Macmillan and Co., 1876), p. 108.

²Op. cit., p. 55.

³Op. cit., p. 94.

rence of ἀνίλεως (Attic for ἀλίλαος) in the second century A. D. grammarian Herodianus Epim. 257.

3:15 δαιμονιώδης. There are only two other known occurrences of this word--the Scholia to Aristophanes, Ranae 295, φάντασμα δαιμονιώδες ὑπὸ Ἑκάτης ἐπιπεμπόμενον and Symmachus' version of Ps. 90:6.

5:11 πολύσπλαχνος. Occurs elsewhere only in Herm. Mand. IV, 3, 5; Sim. V, 7, 4 and in Christian writings of a far later time. The LXX equivalent is πολυέλεος, cf. Ps. 102:8; Joel 2:13. It is undoubtedly Jewish in origin like other words from σπλάγχνα (□` 5 17).

B. Style

1. Good Greek Style

The author of the Epistle of James exhibits a remarkably active literary susceptibility and a feeling for good Greek style. He may be favorably compared to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Some of the outstanding features of his style are:

a. Paranomasia (assonance).--This literary device which consists of the linking together of clauses or sentences by the repetition of the leading word or some of its cognates permeates the whole Epistle. The incidences are far too numerous to list in full. The following are taken from the first chapter.¹

¹For a complete list cf. Mayor, op. cit., ccl-cclii.

1:1, 2 χαίρειν . . . χαράν.

1:3, 4 ὑπομονήν . . . ὑπομονή.

1:4, 5 λειπόμενοι . . . λείπεται.

1:5, 6 αἰτείτω . . . αἰτείτω.

1:6 διακρινόμενος . . . διακρινόμενος.

1:13, 14 πειραζόμενος . . . πειράζομαι . . . ἀπείραστος

. . . παiráζει . . . παiráζεται.

1:14, 15 ἐπιθυμία . . . ἐπιθυμία.

1:15 ἁμαρτίαν . . . ἁμαρτία.

1:19 βραδύς . . . βραδύς.

1:19, 20 ὀρχήν . . . ὀρχή.

1:21-25 Here there is a play on three different words,

λόγον . . . λόγου . . . λόγου, ἀκροαταί . . . ἀκροατής . . .

ἀκροατής and ποιητής . . . ποιητής . . . ποιήσεις.

1:26, 27 θρησκός . . . θρησκεία· θρησκεία.

b. Alliteration.--This is obviously deliberate.

1:1 δοῦλος . . . δώδεκα . . . διασπορά.

1:2 πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις.

1:21 διό . . . δέξασθε . . . δυνάμενον.

3:8 θαμάσαι δύναται.

c. Rhyme (homoeoteleuta).

1:6 διακρινόμενος . . . διακρινόμενος . . . ἀνεμιζομένῳ

. . . ῥιπιζομένῳ.

1:14 ἐξελκόμενος καὶ σελεαζόμενος

2:12 λαλεῖτε . . . ποιεῖτε.

4:8 καθарίσατε . . . ἀγνίσατε.

d. Frequent use of the imperative.--There are all together fifty nine imperatives in the Epistle of which thirty-one are in the present tense and twenty-eight in the aorist. The presence of these imperatives gives to the Epistle a certain terseness and forcefulness which it probably would not otherwise have.

In addition to the features of style listed above, one might mention the use of ⁿasyndeton, the crisp aphoristic flavor of much of the Epistle, the use of certain niceties of grammatical distinction (such as correct use of οὐ and μή), and the high degree of precision displayed in the idiomatic choice of moods and tenses.¹

2. Semitic Influences²

Despite the good Greek usage to be found in the Epistle, there are evidences of Semitic thought-background. It is somewhat precarious to offer a list of Hebraisms or Semitisms, since so many of these constructions have been shown to be part of a large number of "international vulgarisms,"³ and since the experts differ among themselves as to what is or is

¹B. Metzger, "The Language of the New Testament," The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1951), VII, 47.

²Cf. Oesterley, EGT, op. cit., IV, 394-397 for a complete discussion of Semitic influences. Oesterley, however, has overstated the case.

³Robertson says that all the peculiarities in the Epistle cannot be explained as "international vulgarisms." Op. cit., p. 123.

not a Semitism in the New Testament. Despite these difficulties we present the following as possible Semitisms in the Epistle.

a. The use of the attributive genitive for the adjective--the so-called Semitic genitive.

1:23 τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ.

1:25 ἀκροατῆς ἐπιλησμονῆς. Cf. Heb. 3:12 καρδία πονηρὰ ἀπιστίας, and Lk. 18:6 ὁ κριτῆς τῆς ἀδικίας.

2:1 τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης.

2:4 κριταὶ διαλογισμῶν πονηρῶν.

3:6 ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας.

3:13 ἐν πρᾶτῃ σοφίας.

5:15 ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως.

Some of these are more clear than others, but the frequency of the attributive genitive in the Epistle compares favorably with its use in the LXX.

b. Periphrastic tenses.--In the Epistle the verb "to be" in the present tense is used with the present participle.

1:17 πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ πᾶν δῶρημα τέλειον ἄνωθεν ἐστὶ καταβαῖνον ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων

3:15 οὐκ ἐστὶν αὕτη ἡ σοφία ἄνωθεν κατερχομένη.

Periphrastic tenses occur frequently in the LXX, but doubts have been raised whether they constitute Semitisms. Moulton and Milligan cite numerous occurrences of the verb "to be" with the participle from the papyri.¹

¹VGT, *op. cit.*, p. 184 f.

c. The use of dative for the Hebrew infinitive absolute.--5:17 προσευχῇ προσηύξατο. This is called by some grammarians the "cognate dative," but Robertson prefers to call it the "cognate instrumental."¹ Again doubts have been raised as to whether this construction is really a Hebraism.² It occurs more frequently in the LXX than in the New Testament; it also has parallels in classical authors (Plato *Symp.* 195b φεύγων φυγῇ τὸ γῆρας). Blass³ does not accept these as really parallel to the New Testament constructions, which he thinks are examples of translations or imitations of the Hebrew infinitive absolute like אֵלֶּיךָ אֵלֶּיךָ.

d. The use of τοῦ before the infinitive.--5:17 προσευχῇ προσηύξατο τοῦ μὴ βρέξαι. . . . This use of the article before the infinitive is found many times in the Book of Acts, and according to Blass⁴ is after the pattern of the LXX (= Heb. לֵּ). Cf. III Reg. 1:35 καὶ ἐγὼ ἐνετειλάμην τοῦ εἶναι εἰς ἡγούμενον ἐπὶ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ Ἰούδα.

e. Pleonasms.--Robertson thinks that the pleonasms of the Epistle of James are "just those seen in the LXX."⁵

¹Op. cit., p. 531.

²Cf. J. H. Moulton, A Grammar of New Testament Greek (3d ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908), I, 75 f.

³Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch (bearbeitet von A. Debrunner, 8 Aufl.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949), p. 92 (198, 6).

⁴Ibid., p. 180 (400, 7). ⁵Op. cit., p. 123.

1:8 ἀνὴρ δίψυχος.

1:7 μὴ γὰρ οἶέσθω ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος. . . .

1:12 μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὅς Cf. Psa. 1:1 μακάριος
ἀνὴρ, ὅς

1:19 ἔστω δὲ πᾶς ἄνθρωπος.

1:23 οὗτος ὅμοιος ἀνδρὶ κατανοοῦντι. . . .

2:22 ἀνὴρ χρυσοδακτύλιος.

f. Parallelism.

1:15 εἴτα ἡ ἐπιθυμία συλλαβοῦσα τίκτει ἁμαρτίαν,
ἡ δὲ ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα ἀποκύει θάνατον.

1:17 πᾶσα δόσις ἀγαθὴ καὶ δώρημα τέλειον ἄνωθέν ἐστιν
καταβαῖνον ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν φώτων,
παρ' ᾧ οὐκ ἔνι παραλλαγή
ἢ τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα.

1:22 γίνεσθε δὲ ποιηταὶ λόγου,
καὶ μὴ ἀκροαταὶ μόνον . . .

3:11, 12 μήτις ἡ πηγὴ ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ὁπῆς βρύει τὸ
γλυκὺ καὶ τὸ πικρὸν;

μὴ δύναται . . . συκῇ ἐλαίας ποιῆσαι ἢ ἄμπελος σῦκα.

g. Other possible indications of the Semitic background of the author of the Epistle.

(1) The extended use of ποιεῖν. 2:8 καλῶς ποιᾶτε,
2:13 ἡ γὰρ κρίσις ἀνέλεος τῷ μὴ ποιήσαντι ἔλεος; 3:12 μὴ δύ-
ναι, ἀδελφοί μου, συκῇ ἐλαίας ποιῆσαι ἢ ἄμπελος σῦκα; 3:18 καρ-
πὸς δὲ δικαιοσύνης ἐν εἰρήνῃ σπείρεται τοῖς ποιοῦσιν εἰρή-
νην; 4:13 . . . καὶ ποιήσομεν ἐκεῖ ἐνιαυτὸν. . . .

(2) The use of προσωποληψία and προσωπολημπεῖν in 2: 1, 9. These are compounds formed from the LXX translation of the Hebrew phrase ד'ן ה' אשׁף.¹

(3) The over-use of the interjection ἰδοὺ. Moulton points out that the over-use of this interjection can be explained by the probability that the author was accustomed to the frequent use of an equivalent interjection (הן הן) in his mother tongue.²

(4) The use of the demonstrative pronoun οὗτος in 1:23, 25, 26, 27 etc., may reflect the Hebrew אֵלֶּה.

(5) Finally, it has been suggested recently that the thrusting forward of τῶν ἰππων (3:3), the phrase μὴ πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε (3:1), and the position of ἅπαντες (3:2) may reveal a definite Semitic thought background.³

The evidence offered here for Semitic influence will appeal with varying degrees of cogency to different minds. However, Oesterley is not overstating the case when he says:

While allowing due weight to "international vulgarisms," one cannot help feeling that many of these features of literary style point to a Jewish atmosphere of thought, and a Jewish mode of expression.⁴

C. Aramaic Original Theory

The theory has been suggested from time to time that

¹See above, p. 118. ²Op. cit., p. 11.

³Meecham, "The Epistle of James," op. cit., p. 182.

⁴Op. cit., pp. 396, 397.

the Epistle was originally written in Aramaic.¹ This theory arose from: (1) the recognition of Hebraic turn of expression in the Epistle, and (2) the refusal to concede such good Greek to James, the brother of the Lord. Towards the close of the nineteenth century Bishop J. Wordsworth proposed anew this theory on an entirely new basis from previous attempts.² His study of the Epistle of James in the Latin Codex Corbeiensis (ff.) convinced him that a different Greek text underlay it than our present Greek text of the Epistle. He explained the differences in the readings in Corbeiensis³ and our Greek text by postulating two independent Greek versions of the supposed Aramaic original of the Epistle, the one corresponding to our present Greek text, and the other underlying the Latin Codex Corbeiensis.

Mayor has shown that the variations in Codex Corbeienses can be explained without the necessity of an original Aramaic theory on the grounds of the usual principles of textual criticism.⁴ Fatal to the Aramaic original theory is the literary style of the Greek text. It is difficult, if not impossible,

¹See above, p. 32.

²Studia Biblica, First series (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), pp. 142-150.

³For the peculiarities of vocabulary in the Codex Corbeiensis of the Epistle of James cf. F. J. A. Hort, op. cit., pp. 109-111.

⁴For a complete discussion of Wordsworth's theory cf. Mayor, op. cit., pp. cclxi-cclxviii.

to account for James' alliterations, homoeoteleuta, play on words,¹ quotations, both from popular Hellenistic sources (1:17) and the LXX, on the basis of an Aramaic original. Zahn pointedly remarks that, if we do not have the original language in which the Epistle was written, the unconstrained manner of the Epistle would "imply a mastery of the translator's art unparalleled among the ancients."²

F. C. Burkitt has attempted to revive the Aramaic original theory.³ Since he accepts as basically historical Hegesippus' account reported by Eusebius of the character of James, he finds difficulty in ascribing the literary Greek found in the Epistle to the "unshaven devotee who haunted the Temple colonnades."⁴ His solution is that the original of the Epistle was in Aramaic and was translated by a member of the Gentile Greek-speaking Church of Aelia.⁵

The classical, non-Biblical expressions, such as "the wheel of genesis" (3:6) reflect the culture of the translator, not the speech of St. James, and the Sep-

¹Of particular interest is the assonance between χαίρειν and καρὰν. Zahn has pointed out that this would have to be credited to the translator because the original would have read $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha$, which excludes the possibility of assonance and which would have been rendered by an ancient translator $\epsilon\iota\rho\eta\nu\eta$. Intro., op. cit., I, 118, 119.

²Ibid., I, 118.

³Christian Beginnings, op. cit., pp. 65-71.

⁴Ibid., p. 66.

⁵Burkitt suggests Hegesippus himself as a possible translator. Ibid., p. 70.

tuagintal language of the Scripture allusions are the translator's work also. The original was evidently an exhortation to a particular congregation, well known to James (2:2 ff., 4:1, 5:4); the translator has turned it into a general Epistle to the Twelve Tribes in the Dispersion--thereby incidentally including his fellow-churchmen in Gentile Aelia Capitolina.¹

It goes without saying that the arguments fatal to Wordsworth's theory are likewise fatal to Burkitt's. It can be ascertained with a great degree of certainty that Greek was the original language of the Epistle.²

D. The Good Greek of the Epistle and the Traditional Authorship

Ever since de Wette's time, modern criticism of the Epistle of James has found great difficulty in reconciling the good Greek of the Epistle with the traditional view of authorship.³ How is it possible that one who was brought up at Naz-

¹Ibid., p. 69.

²B. W. Bacon regards the Aramaic original theory as "an example of desperate expedients." An Introduction to the New Testament (New York: Macmillan, 1927), p. 160.

³A few examples: "That James himself was the author is out of the question, were it only on account of the familiarity with Greek shown in instances of paranomasia (2:4, 4:11 f.) and still more from the acquaintance with Greek literature revealed in 3:6." C. Weizsacker, The Apostolic Age of the Christian Church, trans. by J. Millar (London: Williams and Norgate, 1894), II, 28. ". . . how could the son of a Nazareth carpenter have attained such fluency in the Greek tongue as is here displayed? . . . For readers in a position to judge, the fact is established that Greek was the writer's native tongue, or one of them at least." A. Jülicher, An Introduction to the New Testament, trans. by Janet Ward (London: Smith Elder & Co., 1904), p. 221. "The language and style belong to a stage of

areth in a pious Pharisaic home should display the grasp of the Greek language revealed in the Epistle of James? How, when, and where could he have learned Greek? Failure to answer these questions has led many scholars to abandon the traditional authorship.

It can be shown that the opportunities for the Lord's brother to have learned Greek and perhaps even to have mastered the language were very good. His father, Joseph, had spent some time in Egypt, which, during the first century A. D., was thoroughly Hellenized. Galilee had a mixed population, even though mainly Jewish, and according to G. W. Thatcher:

The most important difference between them [the Galileans] and the people of Judea lay in their different attitude in daily life towards the larger world of the Roman empire and Hellenistic influence. Knowledge of, at any rate spoken, Greek was to them a necessity of business, and no attempt could be made, as in Jerusalem, to avoid the study of it.¹

Nazareth was not as small and secluded a town as is commonly held. The village was located in southern Galilee just above the plain of Esdraelon. G. A. Smith points out that although Nazareth was located in a basin among the hills, it was by no means isolated.

literary ability and culture that could hardly be expected from a country man of Galilee." A. H. McNeile, An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), p. 192.

¹"Galilee," A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, ed. by James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906-1908), I, 634.

Across Esdraelon, opposite to Nazareth, there emerged from the Samaritan hills the road to Jerusalem, thronged annually with pilgrims, and the road from Egypt with its merchants going up and down. The Midianite caravans could be watched for miles coming up from the fords of Jordan; . . . the caravans from Damascus wound round the foot of the hill on which Nazareth stands. Or if the village boys climbed the northern edge of their hollow home, there was another road within sight, where the companies were still more brilliant--the highway between Acre and Decapolis, along which legions marched, and princes swept with their retinues, and all sorts of travelers from all countries went to and fro.¹

Nazareth was in the vicinity of Sepphoris, which had constantly shown Hellenistic tendencies,² and Strabo,³ the geographer, mentions four of the most distinguished literary men of a slightly earlier day as having spent some time in Gadara.⁴ Hellenistic culture and life undoubtedly had its effects upon the Jewish population of Galilee. To what degree this influence was felt we cannot ascertain exactly, but

we cannot believe that the two worlds which this one landscape embraced did not break into each other. The many roads which crossed Galilee from

¹The Historical Geography of the Holy Land (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1897), p. 433.

²There is a statement in M Kiddushim 4.5 which guarantees the purity of blood of an Israelite "whose name was signed as a witness in the old archives at Sepphoris." E. Schürer concludes from this passage that the population was no longer pure when this statement was uttered. A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ, trans. by J. MacPherson (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1886-1900), II, I, 138.

³xvi. 29.

⁴The New Testament reports a large herd of swine in the vicinity of Gadara, Mk. 5:1 ff.; Matt. 8:28 ff.; Lk. 8:26 ff., an indication of the non-Jewish population.

the Decapolis to the coast, the many inscriptions upon them, the constant trade between the fishermen and the Greek exporters of their fish, the very coins--everywhere thrust Greek upon the Jews of Galilee. The Aramaic dialect began now to be full of Greek words. It is impossible to believe that our Lord and His disciples did not know Greek.¹

The popular Jewish literature of the day, the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic books, including those which originated in Palestine, are extant in Greek only. Some of these books had an original Aramaic or Hebrew text, to be sure, but what is significant is that all of these were subsequently translated into Greek, while the books originally written in Greek were not translated into Aramaic. This fact is certainly an indication of the widespread knowledge of Greek among the Jews, including those of Palestine.

The record of the early Church in the Book of Acts would seem to bear this out. When Stephen made his defense before the Sanhedrin he was speaking in Jerusalem to a strictly Jewish body, and yet he spoke in Greek.² That the Sanhedrin could understand Greek is evidence for a fairly wide knowledge of the language among the more conservative Jews of Jerusalem.³ It also should be remembered that Greek was so well known in

¹G. A. Smith, op. cit., p. 608.

²Cf. R. O. P. Taylor, The Groundwork of the Gospels (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1946), pp. 94, 95.

³We know that there were a considerable number of Hellenists, i. e., Greek-speaking Jews, resident in Jerusalem from the number of them who became part of the early church there. Cf. Acts. 6:1 ff.

Jerusalem that the Jewish mob expected Paul to speak in Greek and were surprised when he addressed them in Aramaic.¹

How far the Greek language penetrated into the very heart of Jewish life in Palestine is seen from the rabbinical writings.² In the Mishnah we read that Greek letters were inscribed on the offering baskets used in the temple.³ In the midland towns of Palestine, as well as the Hellenized towns of the coast, many Greek inscriptions have been found in the synagogues and cemeteries. The very vulgarity of the language of these inscriptions would indicate that this was the Greek spoken by the ordinary folk and not by learned men only. Although prayers were ordinarily said in Hebrew and Aramaic, there is some evidence that on occasion they were uttered in Greek.⁴

¹Acts 22:2. J. Young thinks that the deep silence into which the crowd settled when they learned that Paul was going to address them in Aramaic proves they were more familiar with Aramaic than Greek. "Language of Christ," HDCG, II, 4. Actually, the only thing the incident proves is that the Jewish population of Jerusalem was bi-lingual. Acts 21:37 does not bear on our problem, since the surprise expressed by Lysias when he learned Paul could speak Greek was due to his mistake in identifying Paul with some Egyptian false prophet (who apparently was not a Greek speaker).

²I am greatly indebted to S. Lieberman, Greek in Jewish Palestine, op. cit., for much of the material in this section.

³"In three baskets, each holding three seahs, did they take up Terumah out of the Shekel-chamber, and on them was inscribed [the letters] Aleph, Beth and Gimel. R. Ishmael says: On them was inscribed in Greek [the letters] Alpha, Beta, and Gamma." M Shekalim 3.2.

⁴Lieberman, op. cit., pp. 30-37.

Some of the rabbis must have had an active interest in the Greek language and have studied it. R. Eliezer and R. Joshua were considered to be competent enough in the language to pass judgment on Aquila's Greek translation of the Old Testament¹--a task that implies a mastery of the language. R. Abbahu (cir. 300 A. D.) was so intrigued by Greek that he not only studied it himself, but also provided for the training of his daughter in Greek. He taught in the name of R. Johanan: "A man is permitted to teach his daughter Greek for it serves her as an ornament."²

Further evidence of the rabbis' interest in and knowledge of Greek is revealed in the play on Greek words found in their writings. Lieberman cites the case of R. Abbahu, who was asked by a Gentile: "Whence do you know that a child formed to be born after seven months of pregnancy can live? He replied: From your own language I will prove it to you. ζ (ζῆτα) = ἑπτά, η (ἦτα) = ὀκτώ.³

The rabbis cited secular Greek sources and used Greek translations of the Old Testament. Clear evidence of this dependence on Greek literature is to be found in the Midrashim,⁴

¹TP Megilla, I. 11, 71C.

²TP Pe'a I. 1, 15c. Cited in Lieberman, op. cit., pp. 23, 24. Cf. also T. Zahn, Introduction, op. cit., I, 63.

³Bereshith Rabbah 14.2. Lieberman cites the explanation of L. Cohn: "ζ = 7, η = 8" has to be taken as ζῆτα ἑπτά [μᾶλλον] ἢ τὰ ὀκτώ, i. e., "Infants of seven months are more likely to survive than those of eight." Op. cit., pp. 22, 23.

⁴For many examples cf. Lieberman, ibid., pp. 29-67,

and in all probability the dependence was far greater than the material preserved would indicate, since when the sermons were written down the Greek citations were largely eliminated.

All of this would indicate a general infiltration of the Greek language into Jewish Palestine. Of course, there was opposition to this sort of thing, and the question as to what extent the Jewish masses were affected remains,¹ but that they were affected is evident. M. Brunet de Presle remarks in connection with a papyrus letter addressed to an Arab by two of his brothers:

It is worth our while to notice the rapid diffusion of Greek, after Alexander's conquest, among a mass of people who in all other respects jealously preserved their national characteristics under foreign masters. The papyri show us Egyptians, Persians, Jews and here Arabs, who do not appear to belong to the upper classes, using the Greek language. We must not be too exacting towards them in the matter of style. Nevertheless the letter which follows is almost irreproachable in syntax and orthography, which does not always happen even with men of Greek birth.²

Now the evidence presented perhaps does not explain the good Greek of the writer of the Epistle of James, assuming him to be identified with the Lord's brother. However, it demonstrates the general diffusion of the Greek language in Palestine, and the probability of James having known it to a

and Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., IV, pp. 405 ff.

¹Lieberman thinks that the middle classes imbibed much Greek culture, including the language, while the poorer classes developed a kind of Aramaic Greek jargon. Op. cit., pp. 27, 28.

²Par p 28, quoted in J. H. Moulton, op. cit., I, 6 f.

degree at least, before becoming leader of the Church of Jerusalem.¹ When he did assume that important position there were obvious reasons why he would have desired a mastery of the language.² A large segment of the church in Jerusalem was made up of Hellenists. These Hellenists had lived in the lands of the Dispersion and were completely at home in the Greek language. They were now permanent residents in the Holy City. James surely would have associations with these, and knowledge of Greek was essential. His position also would bring him into contact with Jewish pilgrims, many of whom were educated Jews to whom Greek was the mother tongue. The prestige of the Jerusalem Church would demand that its leader be able to speak to these Jews in a manner which would be considered at least reasonably good, and, of course, any written communication would have to meet the same standards. We do not know what linguistic aptitudes the brother of the Lord possessed, but it is not too much to assume, in the light of

¹H. Maynard Smith makes an interesting comparison in this connection: "As in many a humble home Scotch students have learned to read the Greek Testament, it is not improbable that in the devout home in Nazareth a student should have read the Septuagint and sapiential books of his race." The Epistle of S. James (Oxford: Blackwell, 1914), p. 14. Cf. also J. H. Moulton, Essays on Some Biblical Questions of the Day by Members of the University of Cambridge, ed. H. Barclay Swete (London: Macmillan and Co., 1909), pp. 487 f.

²That facilities for studying Greek were available in Jerusalem is evidenced by TB Sota 49b.

the general diffusion of Greek in Jewish Palestine and the need for James to possess a mastery of the language, that the Greek of the Epistle was penned by him.

CHAPTER V

THE CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE

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The Epistle of James is the most undogmatic book of the New Testament. There is hardly a trace to be found of the great theological themes which so dominate the Pauline epistles and which have such an important place in the rest of the books of the New Testament. James makes no mention of the incarnation of Christ. His name appears only twice (1:1 and 2:1). There is no mention, directly, or by implication, of His sufferings, death¹ or resurrection. Since these are the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, their absence from the Epistle is striking.²

A second feature, which arises out of the first, is the Epistle's great emphasis on the practical aspects of Christianity. Farrar quotes the words of Herder on the thought content of the Epistle:

What a noble man speaks in this Epistle! Deep unbroken patience in suffering! Greatness in poverty! Joy in sorrow! Simplicity, sincerity, firm direct confidence in prayer! . . . How he wants action! Action! not words, not dead faith!³

¹Some take Jas. 5:6 to be a reference to Christ's death.

²This led Spitta and Massebieau to propose the non-Christian origin of the Epistle.

³The Early Days of Christianity (London: Cassell & Co., 1885), p. 324.

A third feature of the contents of the Epistle is its obvious Judaistic flavor.¹ Making due allowances for certain intrusions of Hellenistic thought, it is unmistakable that the author is moving in the circle of Jewish ideas.² In this chapter the outstanding concepts of the Epistle of James will be examined with special reference to the beliefs of Palestinian Judaism.

A. Temptation

The Epistle opens with an abrupt challenge:

Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.³

πειρασμοί is correctly rendered by the R. S. V. "trials," since James seems to be referring here to external adversities (although internal ones are not wholly excluded). The specific reference may be to persecution or perhaps the trial of poverty, since so much is said on that subject in the Epistle. But whatever is specifically meant by πειρασμοί, the teachings we find

¹"The . . . religious attitude of the average rabbinical Jew would in most respects sum up the fundamental ideas of the Epistle of James." Ropes, op. cit., p. 31. The distinctive Christian features, of course, remain. James has baptized these rabbinical ideas into Christ.

²Cf. Ropes' impressive list of distinctive Jewish ideas to be found in the Epistle. Op. cit., p. 29.

³Jas. 1:2-4. All English quotations of the Epistle in this chapter are from the Revised Standard Version.

here relative to them are distinctively Jewish: (1) joy in trial, and (2) the use of trial--the building and perfecting of character.

1. Joy in Trials

A glance at Strack-Billerbeck will reveal how commonplace this teaching is in the Jewish writings.¹ The Mishnah states: "Man is bound to bless [God] for the evil even as he blesses [God] for the good, as it is written, And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might."² In the Talmud we read: "R. Simeon b. Gamaliel observed: We too cherish our troubles, but what can we do? For if we write [them down], we are inadequate."³ To express joy in trials was a desirable and commendable trait as is seen from the statement in TB Shabbath 88b:

Our Rabbis taught: Those who are insulted but do not insult, hear themselves reviled without answering, act through love and rejoice in suffering, of them the Writ saith, But they who love Him are as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.

¹Op. cit., III, 751.

²M Berakoth 9.5. Cf. Moore, op. cit., II, 253.

³TB Shabbath 13b. Cf. TB Gittim 36b. Moore, op. cit., II, 252. Moore also cites the instructive example of R. Akiba, who along with his colleagues, made a sick visit to R. Eliezer. Akiba, instead of extolling the great rabbi said, "Precious are chastisements" and substantiated his statement by the example of King Manasseh who came to know that the Lord was God through chastisements, something which all his father's instruction did not accomplish. Ibid., 253.

Oesterley contrasts this teaching in James with that of the Lord's Prayer:

It is true that the exhortation to look upon temptations with joy is scarcely compatible with the prayer, "lead us not into temptation" (Matt. 6:13; Lk. 11:4) or with the words, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26:41; Lk. 22:40; see also Mk. 14:38; Lk. 22:46; Rev. 3:10); but as is evident from a number of indications in this Epistle, the writer's Judaism is stronger than his Christianity. . ."¹

The teaching in the Epistle to look upon trial with joy, unmistakably shows how deeply rooted the author is in Judaism, but it does not warrant Oesterley's conclusion. On the basis of this reasoning one would also have to consider Paul's and Peter's Judaism stronger than their Christianity, for the same teaching occurs in their Epistles.² It is also found in the sayings of Jesus.³ The early Christians apparently found no contradiction in the two teachings, but rather considered them complementary. The Christian with a new revelation of his own inherent weakness and sinfulness could well pray, "Lead us not into temptation," but when temptations did come, he considered them an occasion for proving the faithfulness of God, and thus they became the means of rejoicing.

2. The Use of Trial--the Building and Perfecting of Character

¹EGT, op. cit., IV, 421.

²Col. 1:24. I Pet. 1:6; 4:12, 13.

³Matt. 5:11, 12.

Although Judaism considered the trials which befell the nation and the individual as retributive,¹ i. e., punishment for the transgression or neglect of God's will, and this measure-for-measure, it also recognized their educational value. Trials prove educational, however, only in the case of the righteous.

R. Jose b. R. Hanina said: When a flax worker knows that his flax is of good quality, the more he beats it the more it improves and the more it glistens; but if it is of inferior quality, he cannot give it one knock without its splitting.²

The educational end of trial is also taught in Ecclesiasticus: "A man's compassion is for his neighbor; the compassion of the Lord on all flesh, correcting and disciplining and instructing. . ."³ The same theme occurs in the Psalms of Solomon: "Blessed is the man whom the Lord remembers with correction and turns him from an evil way with the rod, that he may be purified from sin and not make it more."⁴

In the Epistle of James the subject of trial is taken up again in verse 12: "Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of

¹This belief was based on Lev. 26:14-39 and Deut. 28:15-68. For a complete discussion of Judaism's teaching concerning chastisement cf. Moore, op. cit., II, 248-256.

²Bereshith Rabbah 32.3.

³Eccclus. 18:13.

⁴Pss. of Sol. 10:1. Cf. Bereshith Rabbah 9.5-9 where suffering, among other things usually considered to be evil, is declared good since it has contributed to the welfare of the human race.

life which God has promised to those that love him." This statement is of special interest in the light of the rabbinical teaching that a man who has been spared trials has "had his world" here.¹ A very instructive incident occurs in TB Sanhedrin 101a which illustrates this belief. R. Eliezer had fallen sick and his disciples went to visit him. When they entered the house they all broke out into tears, all but Akiba, who laughed. When they asked him why he laughed he answered them by asking them why they wept. Their answer was, "Shall the Scroll of the Torah be in pain and we not weep?" Akiba replied:

For that very reason I rejoice. As long as I saw that my master's wine did not turn sour, nor his flax smitten, nor his oil putrified, nor his honey become rancid, I thought, God forbid that he may have received all his reward in this world [leaving nothing for the next]; but now that I see him lying in pain, I rejoice [knowing] that his reward has been treasured up for him in the next.²

The idea that the enduring of suffering had something to do with attaining to the world to come is a frequent theme in the rabbinical writings: "Is, then, suffering good? Yes, because through its means human beings attain to the World to Come."³ "Go out and see which is the way that brings man to the life

¹Cf. Moore, op. cit., II, 253 f.

²Cf. Lk. 16:25; "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

³Bereshith Rabbah 9.8.

of the future world? You must say: Chastisements."¹

Beginning at verse 13 the author turns to another problem, the origin of temptation:

Let no man say when he is tempted, "I am tempted of God;" for God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one; but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.² Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death.³

Here, without question, James is moving within the confines of Jewish theology. The origin of sin was a formidable problem which had long occupied the minds of the rabbis. Their solution was the doctrine of the yetser ha-ra (הַיֵּסֶר הָרָע⁴), the evil tendency⁵ in man, whose function is to lure him to sin. It is very likely that James, through his contact with Pharisaical circles, would have been familiar with the concept.

¹Mekilta Bahodesh to Ex. 20:23 (II, 280). All citations from the Mekilta are from J. Lauterbach, Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1933-1935), 3 vols.

²ἐπιθυμία. Büchsel identifies ἐπιθυμία with the rabbinical yetser ha-ra. TWzNT, op. cit., III, 170.

³Jas. 1:13-15.

⁴The phrase is probably derived from Gen. 6:5 and 8:21. Discussions of the yetser ha-ra will be found in Moore, op. cit., I, 479-493; Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., IV, I, 466 f.; S. Schechter, Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1923), pp. 242-292; A. Cohen, Everman's Talmud (London: Dent & Sons Ltd., 1932), pp. 93-99; Charles, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, op. cit., II, 555; W. D. Davies, op. cit., pp. 21-35; and with special reference to the teaching in the Epistle of James, Oesterley, EGT, op. cit., IV, 408-411.

⁵Although an evil tendency, it was not evil in itself. Cf. Moore, op. cit., I, 482 f., and A. Cohen, op. cit., p. 96.

The doctrine of the evil impulse occurs as early as Ecclesiasticus:

Say not: "From God is my transgression," for that which he hateth he made not. Say not: "(It is) he that made me to stumble," for there is no need of evil men. Evil and abomination doth the Lord hate. And he doth not let it come nigh to them that fear him. God created man from the beginning, and placed him in the hand of his yetser (δίαβούλιον).¹

Some of the rabbis taught that the yetser ha-ra' was present in the child from his earliest infancy, i. e., from conception. Certain difficulties were raised by this view which led to general agreement that birth marked the entrance of the evil impulse into man.² Gen. 4:7: "Sin lieth at the door," was used to support this view.³

There were differences of opinion relative to the source or origin of the yetser ha-ra',⁴ but they were subsequently crystallized into the belief that, since God was the creator of all things, he must have created the yetser ha-ra'

¹Eccclus. 15:11-14. Moore says that δίαβούλιον is probably equivalent to נִצְּחָן. Op. cit., I, 481. Cf. IV Ezra 3:21 f.: "For the first Adam, clothing himself with the evil heart, transgressed and was overcome; and likewise also all who were born of him. Thus the infirmity became inveterate; the Law indeed was in the heart of the people, but (in conjunction) with the evil germ; so what was good departed, and the evil remained." Cf. IV Ezra 4:30 f.

²TB Sanhedrin 91b. Cf. Schechter, op. cit., p. 253; Moore, op. cit., I, 481.

³Ibid.

⁴Cf. Oesterley, EGT, Op. cit., IV, 410 f.

too.¹ It is not difficult to see how this doctrine could be perverted. If God created the evil impulse within man, then man is not responsible for his sin, for it is God who tempts him. This is the perversion which James is refuting in 1:13.

It should also be mentioned that the rabbis taught that the two great passions which the yetser ha-ra' played upon most were idolatry and adultery. In the light of this fact ἐπιθυμία in Jas. 1:14, 15 probably refers to sensual passion.² The rabbis taught that the result of submitting to the evil impulse results in sin,³ and sin in turn brings death. This is precisely the pattern of Jas. 1:15: "desire (ἐπιθυμία) . . . gives birth to sin; and sin . . . brings forth death."

Although the evil impulse will not finally be extirpated until God himself deals with it in the world to come,⁴ it can

¹TB Kiddushin 30b: "Even so did the Holy One, blessed be He, speak unto Israel: 'My children! I created the Evil Desire, . . .'"

²ἐξελκόμενος and δელαιζόμενος are words primarily connected with fishing and hunting but in 1:14 are used in their metaphorical sense of alluring to sensual sin. Cf. Ropes, op. cit., 156 f.

³Sometimes the evil impulse is said to cause death directly as in TB Baba Bathra 16a and Exodus Rabbah 30.18, but, "the identification of the Evil Yetser with the Angel of Death is sometimes modified in the sense of the former being the cause of death consequent upon sin rather than of his performing the office of the executioner." Schechter, op. cit., p. 245.

⁴TB Sukkah 52a: "In the world to come God will bring the Evil Impulse and slay it in the presence of the righteous and the wicked." Davies, op. cit., p. 23; Cohen, op. cit., pp. 98 f.

be resisted most effectively by occupying oneself with the Word of God (Torah).¹ Thus the statement in Jas. 1:21, "Therefore put away all filthiness² and rank growth of wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word (ἐμφυτος λόγος), which is able to save your souls." The ἐμφυτος λόγος is the Christian equivalent of the Torah.³ James' readers are to receive this word, i. e., really receive it, act upon it and it will (can) become a means of salvation. The similarity to the rabbinic doctrine is striking.

Opposed to the yetser ha-ra' was the yetser ha-tob (יֵטֶר טוֹב), the good inclination. The rabbis arrived at two inclinations from the word "and be formed" (wajjitzer) in Gen. 2:7; since the Hebrew word for inclination has an

¹TB Kiddushin 30b: "Even so did the Holy One, blessed be He, speak unto Israel: 'My children! I created the Evil Desire, but I [also] created the Torah, as its antidote; if you occupy yourselves with the Torah, you will not be delivered into his hand, for it is said, If thou doest well, shalt thou not be exalted? But if ye do not occupy yourselves with the Torah, ye shall be delivered into his hand, for it is written, sin coucheth at the door.' Cf. also ibid.: "The School of R. Ishmael taught: My son, if this repulsive [wretch] assail thee, lead him to the school house: if he is of stone, he will dissolve; if iron, he will shiver [into fragments], for it is said, Is not my word like as fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock."

²Greek ῥυπαρία. A very rare word not found elsewhere in the New Testament or in the LXX. See above, p. 117. The Syriac has ܠܚܝܬܐ and uses the same word to translate ܠܚܝܬܐ in Ezek. 44:6. The Hebrew word means "abomination" and usually has reference to idolatrous practices but also occurs in connection with immorality. Cf. Oesterley EGT, op. cit., IV, 432. This is especially interesting in the light of the rabbinic teaching that the yetser ha-ra' primarily induces man into the sins of idolatry and immorality.

³See below, p. 157.

initial "j," they concluded on the basis of the double "j" in wajjitzer that there must be two inclinations!¹ The earliest known reference to the yetser ha-tob is found in Test. Asher 1:5, 6:

For there are two ways of good and evil, and with these are the two inclinations in our breasts discriminating them. Therefore if the soul takes pleasure in the good (inclination), all its actions are in righteousness; and if in sin it straightway repenteth.

Jas. 1:17: "Every good endowment and perfect gift is from above . . ."² may possibly be a reference to the yetser ha-tob, the point being that God, instead of being accused of being the cause of temptation and consequent sin, is the source of the inclination towards good, indeed of all good in the experience of men.

There remains one other passage on the general theme of trial in the Epistle. It occurs in the eschatological passage of chapter five where the author admonished his readers to "be patient . . . until the coming of the Lord,"³ and as an example of suffering and patience they are to "take the prophets"⁴

¹TB Berakoth 61a. Moore, op. cit., I, 483 f.; Cohen, op. cit., p. 94.

²Cf. the saying of R. Chaninah, "Nothing evil descends from above." Bereshith Rabbah 51.3, Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 752.

³Jas. 5:7.

⁴There is no reason to take προφήται to include "prophets in the Christian Church." Cf. Knowling, op. cit., p.

who spoke in the name of the Lord."¹ It is significant that the example of Christ is not appealed to as in I Peter 2:21 ff. James is writing to Jews, who, as Mayor suggests, "may have been less familiar with the details of our Lord's life than with the books of the O. T., which were read to them in the synagogue every Sabbath day."² The Old Testament prophets often appear in the New Testament as examples,³ and of course, the rabbis were always harking back to them. Since Job was traditionally reckoned as a prophet,⁴ it is not surprising to find him here cited as belonging to their number. There is no other New Testament writer who mentions Job, but James considers him an excellent example of how "the end of the Lord with patient sufferers justifies the ordeal."⁵ The basic idea of this passage is that "patient endurance can sustain itself on the conviction that hardships are not meaningless, but that God has some end or purpose in them which he will accomplish, if sufferers only are brave enough to hold fast to Him."⁶ This

132, and E. H. Plumptre, The General Epistle of St. James (The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, ed. J. J. S. Perowne; Cambridge: University Press, 1895), p. 101. By the "prophets" James means the Old Testament prophets, Elijah, Jeremiah, and others.

¹Jas. 5:10.

²op. cit., p. 163.

³Matt. 5:12; 23:27; Acts 7:52; Heb. 11:32 ff.

⁴Ezek. 14:14, 20; Ecclus. 49:9.

⁵Moffatt, The Epistle of St. James, op. cit., p. 73.

⁶Moffatt, ibid., p. 74.

teaching is the same as we found in the initial portion of the Epistle (1:4). Here it is vividly illustrated by calling to mind the examples of the prophets, and Job, in particular.

B. Law

In order to understand the treatment of law in the Epistle it is necessary to outline the typical first century Jewish attitude relative to this subject. Since the word "law" itself lends itself to so much misunderstanding, a definition is in order. Law, Moore has pointed out, must "not be understood in the restricted sense of legislation, but must be taken to include the whole of revelation--all that God has made known of his nature, character, and purpose, and of what he would have man be and do."¹ The Jews had an unbelievable veneration for law. They identified Revelation, and more specifically, the Mosaic Law, with Wisdom² and thus declared it to be older than the world.³ Indeed, the world was created by law,⁴ and

¹Op. cit., I, 263.

²In Ecclus. 24 wisdom is identified with the βίβλος διαθήκης θεοῦ ὑψίστου, νόμον ὃν ἐντείλατο ὑμῖν Μωυσῆς. Cf. Deut. 4:6; Prov. 8. Moore, ibid., 264; Schechter, op. cit., 127-129.

³Cf. the interesting incident between the Torah and God before the creation found in Pirke Rabbi Eliezer 3: "When the Holy One, blessed be he, consulted the Torah as to the creation of the world, she answered, 'Master of the world (to be created), if there be no host, over whom will the king reign, and if there be no peoples praising him, where is the glory of the king?' The Lord of the world heard the answer and it pleased him." Schechter, op. cit., p. 81. Cf. Bereshith Rabbah 8.2.

⁴Bereshith Rabbah 1.1 records the statement of R. Akiba.

for law;¹ its stability was dependent upon it along with worship and deeds of loving kindness.² The law which God revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai was the same law which was in existence before the creation of the world, and it would go on existing in the world to come.³ The Jews simply could not imagine existence without law.

It is not difficult to see, in the light of their veneration for the Torah, how difficult it would be for the Jews to discard this time-honored attitude toward the law. James himself, brought up in the pious Pharisaical tradition, understood this problem all too well. It is for this reason that he presents the ethical side of Christianity as a perfect law, a law of freedom and a royal or kingly law. He is using these terms as points of reference in speaking with his hearers, and at the same time assuring them that, although they are now Christians, for them there is still the law. However, by law, as we shall see, James no longer meant what the non-Christian Jew would understand by that term. The concept has been baptized into Christ.

"Beloved (of God) are Israel, for to them was given the instrument with which the world was created." Moore, op. cit., 266 f.

¹Cf. Prov. 3:19.

²M Aboth 2.1: "Simeon the Just was of the remnants of the Great Synagogue. He used to say: By three things is the world sustained: by the Law, by the [Temple-] service, and by deeds of loving kindness." Cf. Moore, op. cit., I, 268.

³Cf. Baruch 4:1 αὕτη ἡ βίβλος τῶν προσταγμάτων τοῦ

As we have already seen, the Epistle of James is primarily interested in ethics. There is little if any emphasis on the great evangelical truths of the Gospel. In other words, it is basically didache, not kerygma. C. H. Dodd makes an interesting analogy between the kerygma and didache of the early Church and the basic formula of the religion of the Old Testament. He points out that the Decalogue begins: "I am the Lord, thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt," a declaration of what God has done for man. Then the Decalogue goes on to lay down its basic moral commands, a declaration of what man must do for God. Similarly, the Christian faith declares in the kerygma what God has done for man through Christ, and then it too goes on to lay down its basic moral commands in the didache. Thus, as the Torah is represented as a Covenant in the Old Testament, so the Christian religion is represented as a New Covenant in the New Testament.¹ It is this second aspect of Christianity, man's obligation consequent upon what God has done for him, which is the great emphasis in the Epistle of James. This fact must be taken into account when dealing with the concept of law.

There are three passages in the Epistle in which the subject of law emerges. The first is Jas. 1:22-25.

θεοῦ καὶ ὁ νόμος ὁ ὑπάρχων εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα . Also Tobit 1:6; I Enoch 99:2; Eccclus. 24:9, 23. Cf. Matt. 5:18.

¹The Law of Christ, op. cit., pp. 66, 67.

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror: for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But he who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer that forgets but a doer that acts, he shall be blessed in his doing.

This passage, in addition to bringing up the question of law and its meaning, also gives prominence to the closely related idea of the "word." Since these two concepts are very closely inter-related, and sometimes identified with each other, we shall discuss first the occurrence and meaning of λόγος in the Epistle. In two verses previous to the above passage the author speaks of the λόγος. V. 18 reads: "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures," and v. 21: "Therefore put away all filthiness and rank growth of wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."

The expression "word of truth" (λόγος ἀληθείας) grows out of a discussion about blaming God for temptation and consequent sin. James refutes this charge on the basis of the nature of God ("God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one."), the psychological analysis of temptation ("... he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin; and sin when it is full-grown brings forth death."), the fact of the basic consistent goodness of God ("Every good endowment and every perfect

gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change"), and finally by an appeal to their experience in the Gospel ("Of his own will he brought us forth¹ by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures."). Mayor aptly states the point of this verse: "So far from God tempting us to evil, His will is the cause of our regeneration."²

¹The word ἀποκεῖν has caused a great deal of speculation, since it really means "bare," not "beget," and is not used of the male sex. W. L. Knox calls the use of the word in this passage a "startling blunder" and attributes it to the author's Hellenistic affinities. Op. cit., p. 14. Schammbarger also calls attention to its strange use and sees in it a reference to Gnosticism. The Valentinians taught that the aeons occurred in ascending order, each succeeding one coming forth from the preceding. The aeons were not created according to the will of the "father of lights," but each aeon produced the succeeding one by his own impulse. James, in this passage, is refuting this teaching. Christians are brought forth according to God's will by the word of truth. Op. cit., pp. 58 ff. C. M. Edsman thinks v. 18 reveals cosmological (not soteriological) associations, which stem from widely divergent sources. He finds three Schöpfungsmotive in v. 18: (1) creation as the act of the will; (2) creation regarded as giving birth; (3) creation as an act of an intermediary. The first idea has its roots in the Old Testament, the second is derived from Gnosticism and the third from the logos doctrine. "Schöpferwille und Geburt Jac 1:18. Eine Studie zur altchristlichen Kosmologie," Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, XXXVIII (1939), 11-44. These commentators lack the imagination of the author of the Epistle. Many of the attributes of motherhood are ascribed to God in the Old Testament. We needn't be so literal here. Nor is it necessary to look to Gnosticism to explain this passage. There is no indication in the entire Epistle that a doctrinal error is being refuted. The whole tone is intensely practical, not doctrinal. Also the idea of being born twice was not unfamiliar to Judaism. Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., II, 420 ff. and Selwyn, op. cit., p. 306.

²Op. cit., p. 62.

If this analysis is correct then the "word of truth" is the Gospel, the highest expression of the will of God, through which James' readers have become "first fruits of his creatures."

Now this interpretation has been challenged by Spitta, and Hort in particular, and following the latter, Rendall and Cadoux. The objections raised are (1) ἡμᾶς refers not to Christians but to mankind in general, (2) the phrase λόγος ἀληθείας does not refer to the Gospel but rather the original creation of man by the word of God and, (3) κτισμάτων refers to the creation, not to men, and thus if the reference is to regeneration by the Gospel the word ἀνθρώπων would have been used. These objections are not conclusive. James is writing primarily to Christians (cf. 2:1 where they are spoken of as holding the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ) who were being admonished to live out existentially their faith. Even Christians have been known to blame God for sin and failure! The phrase λόγος ἀληθείας does not have the article here as it does in Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5; and II Tim. 2:15, where the phrase is a technical one for the Gospel, but as Mayor has pointed out, "a main cause of the omission of the article in biblical Greek was the desire to shorten and compress, especially in familiar phrases where this could be done without causing confusion."¹

¹Further Studies in the Epistle of St. James (London: Macmillan and Co., 1913), p. 17. Cf. II Cor. 6:7.

At any rate, the use of the article in Hellenistic Greek being what it was, the absence of it here is not decisive against identifying the phrase with the Gospel. The final objection is based on the statement in Rev. 14:4 where the Church is spoken of as those ἡγοράθησαν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀπαρχὴ τῷ Θεῷ not ἀπαρχὴ κτισμάτων. But this is not the nearest parallel to Jas. 1:18. A closer parallel is Paul's statement in Rom. 8:19 ff. where the eager longing of the creation (τῆς κτίσεως) is depicted as waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. These objections, then, to the interpretation of the passage given above are weighty, but certainly not fatal.¹ The λόγος ἀληθείας is the Gospel of Christ. James is writing to Christians, and as we should expect in a practical letter to Christians, the emphasis is on didache.

That James is writing primarily to Christians appears again from v. 21. A thought connection exists between this verse and the passage discussed above. James has just shown how foolish it is to blame God for temptation in the light of what we know about the nature of God, the psychological process of temptation, and the consistent good-giving of God, which includes the gift of new life. In vs. 19-21 the climax is reached in the form of a powerful admonition. They are to be quick to

¹Ropes says that what is decisive against Spitta's and Hort's interpretation is that "the figure of begetting was not used for creation (Gen. 1:26 does not cover this), whereas it came early into use with reference to Christians, who deemed themselves 'sons of God.'" Op. cit., p. 166.

hear and slow to speak¹ (undoubtedly a reference to their accusations against God) and are not to become angry; they are rather to put away their sins (which, after all, are to be blamed on no one but themselves) and to receive the ἔμφυτος λόγος which is able to save their souls.

Now this ἔμφυτος λόγος is to be identified with the λόγος ἀληθείας of v. 18. Here the λόγος is ἔμφυτος, "implanted," not "innate." The word of the Gospel had been implanted in their hearts, for they were already Christians, but they had heard and were not doing. Thus James admonishes them to receive (δέξασθε) the ἔμφυτος λόγος, i. e., receive it in all its fulness.² This is tantamount to becoming doers of the word (v. 22). And when he adds, "which is able to save your souls," he is simply giving a description of this implanted word and is not suggesting that the souls of his hearers had not already been saved.

The connection with the next section in the Epistle is obvious. The receiving of the ἔμφυτος λόγος will manifestly result in being a doer and not a hearer only.³ 1:22 has a

¹Cf. Eccles. 5:11; M Aboth 1.15; 1.17, etc. Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 753.

²Cf. the use of δέχεσθαι in Deut. 30:1: καὶ ἔσται ὡς ἂν ἔλθωσιν ἐπὶ σὲ πάντα τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα, ἡ λογία καὶ ἡ κατάρτα, ἣν ἔδωκα πρὸ προσώπου σου, καὶ δέξῃ εἰς τὴν καρδίαν σου ἐν πάσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.

³This is a self-evident precept of ethics and many parallels are to be found in Jewish authors. Of particular

close parallel to Paul's statement in Rom. 2:13: οὐ γὰρ οἱ ἀκροαταὶ νόμου δίκαιοι παρὰ τῷ θεῷ ἀλλ' οἱ ποιηταὶ δικαιωθήσονται.^{ον} The "word" in both these passages refers to the revealed will of God, and in the James passage more particularly as that will is revealed in didache. The analogy which the writer of the Epistle now draws is especially instructive. The hearing-but-not-doing man is like a person who sees the reflection of his own face¹ in a mirror. "He sees himself, it is true, but he goes on with whatever he was doing without the slightest recollection of what sort of person he saw in the mirror."² This mirror, which reveals the imperfections of the outer man, is contrasted with the perfect law, the law of freedom, which reflects the inner man. The man who looks

interest are Deut. 30:8 ff.; Ezek. 33:22; Prov. 3:1 f; 4:1 ff.; 4:20 ff.; 6:3; Wis. 6:5; Eccclus. 3:1; M Aboth 1.17; 3.9; 6.7; 5.14; TB Shabbath 88a. Cf. Matt. 7:24: πᾶς οὖν ὅστις ἀκούει μου τοὺς λόγους τούτους καὶ ποιεῖ αὐτοὺς, ὁμοιωθήσεται ἀνδρὶ φρονίμῳ, ὅστις ὠκοδόμησεν αὐτοῦ τὴν οἰκίαν ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν.

¹The phrase is τὸ πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως. As in 3:16 γένεσις is used in the sense of "nature" or "creation." Mayor, (ad loc.) thus takes it to mean "fleeting earthly existence," as in Jud. 12:11. Thus the comparison is between the face which belongs to this passing life, which is seen in the mirror, and that which is being molded here for eternity, which is seen by looking into the perfect law, the law of freedom.

²Jas. 1:24 in Phillip's translation, op. cit., p. 186. The tenses in this verse are interesting: κατενόησεν . . . ἀπελήλυθεν . . . ἐπελάθετο. H. Maynard Smith remarks: "By the aorists he shows that the impression was momentary, and the oblivion instantaneous; by the perfect he implies a continuing condition of absence from the mirror." The Epistle of S. James (Oxford: Blackwell, 1914), p. 85.

(παράκυσας¹) into this law and makes a habit of doing so (παρμεΐνας²), puts the law into practice and finds true happiness.

It is not strange to find the expression "perfect law" in a letter purporting to have come from a Palestinian Jew. Psa. 19:7: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."³ James, as a Jew, writing to Jews, is deliberately ascribing to didache the attributes of the law. For James it is perfect because it was made perfect by Jesus Christ.

It is more difficult to explain the expression "law of freedom." The terms seem to be contradictory. Law implies commandments and they in turn imply restrictions. The Old Testament knows nothing of freedom in relation to the law,

¹ παρακύπτειν, although meaning sometimes a hasty and cursory glance, as Hort (*ad loc.*) suggests, also can mean "to examine." Jn. 20:5 and 11 are cases in point. Here παρακύπτειν is used of John and Mary looking into the empty tomb, the one seeing the linen cloths and the napkin, and the other the two angels sitting where the body of Jesus had lain. Westcott says that "the idea which it conveys is that of looking intently with eager desire and effort at that which is partially concealed." The Gospel According to St. John; The Greek Text with Introduction and Notes (London: John Murray, 1908), II, 339. Cf. the usage of παρακύπτειν in Gen. 26:8: ἐγένετο δὲ πολυχρόνιος ἐκεῖ· παράκυσας δὲ Αβιμελεχ ὁ βασιλεὺς Γεραρων διὰ τῆς θυρίδος εἶδεν τὸν Ἰσαακ παίζοντα μετὰ Ρεβέκκας τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ. Also I Peter 1:12; Ecclus. 14:20-23.

² παρμεΐνειν means "to persevere." Here it is contrasted with the transitory look of v. 24. Hauck remarks: "Solches Dabeibleiben und Dabeiverharren schildert die inneren Eigentum und zur bewegenden Macht seines Handelns wird." Op. cit., p. 83.

³Cf. Rom. 12:2: τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον.

with the possible exception of Psa. 119:32: "I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts." Although R. Jehoshua b. Levi said: "Thou findest no freeman excepting him that occupies himself in the study of the Law,"¹ this freedom, according to R. Jeremiah, is only in the world to come.² The law was a yoke rather than a means of freedom.³ Dibelius suggests that the concept of law as freedom is Stoic and came into

¹The entire saying arises out of Ex. 32:16: "And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven (haruth) upon the tables. Read not haruth but heruth (freedom), for thou findest no freeman excepting him that occupies himself in the study of the Law." M Aboth 6.2. Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 753. Strack-Billerbeck cites Tanhuma 115a where there is also a play on the words haruth and heruth of Ex. 32:16. Various interpretations are offered. "R. Jehuda said: Freedom from worldly riches; and R. Nechemia said: Freedom from the angel of death; and the Rabbi said, Freedom from pain."

²TB Baba Mezia 85b: "He who makes himself a servant to the [study of the] Torah in this world becomes free in the next."

³Cf. M Aboth 3.5. Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., I, 608: It was undoubtedly this yoke that Jesus is contrasting with His yoke in Matt. 11:29 f. Cf. Acts 15:10 and Schürer's graphic description of life under the law: "It was a fearful burden which a spurious legalism had laid upon the shoulders of the people. . . . Nothing was left to free personality, everything was placed under the bondage of the letter. The Israelite, zealous for the law, was obliged at every impulse and movement to ask himself, what is commanded? At every step, at the work of his calling, at prayer, at meals, at home and abroad, from early morning till late in the evening, from youth to old age, the dead, the deadening formula followed him. A healthy moral life could not flourish under such a burden, action was nowhere the result of inward motive, . . . Life was a continual torment to the earnest man, who felt at every moment that he was in danger of transgressing the law." Op. cit., ii, II, 124, 125. This is probably an overstatement, but the essential truth of the burden of the law, despite frequent denials, remains.

Judaism through Philo.¹ Philo says: ὅσοι μετὰ νόμου ζῶσιν ,
 ἐλεύθεροι .² But James does not have in mind the results
 of law, ethically speaking, on the individual. It is a law of
 freedom, i. e., a law which applies to those who have the sta-
 tus of freedom, not from law but from sin and self through the
 "word of truth." This law is for free men, and is a Palestin-
 ian Jew's way of describing the Christian's standard of con-
 duct found in didache. Parry summarizes the meaning of the
 phrase "perfect law, law of freedom" as

the Christian standard of righteousness. There is
 of course for Christians, as for Jews, a standard of
 righteousness. The distinguishing mark of the Christ-
 ian standard is that it is perfect, a complete and
 final expression of God's righteousness, and that it
 is imposed upon men who are free, not from the duty
 of obeying, but from all unconquerable obstacles to
 obedience.³

Now this tendency to describe didache as law is found
 again in chapter two of our Epistle.

If you really fulfill the royal law, according to
 the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as
 yourself," you do well. But if you show partial-
 ity, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as
 transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but
 fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.
 For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," said al-
 so, "Do not kill." If you do not commit adultery
 but do kill, you have become a transgressor of the
 law. So speak and so act as those who are to be
 judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is

¹Op. cit., pp. 111 f. Dibelius has an extensive ex-
 cursus on the origin of the concept of law in the Epistle.

²Quod Omn. Prob. Lib. 45.

³Op. cit., p. 28.

without mercy to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.¹

This paragraph arises out of a rebuke for the partiality (προσωποληψία) which was being shown by James' readers towards the rich. This partiality was being condoned by an appeal to the law of love to one's neighbor, an "excuse by the pretext of love."² So James writes: "If you really fulfill the royal law, you do well." (The intimation is that they are not fulfilling it.) The "royal law" is connected with the statement in v. 5 where James reminds his readers that God has chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to those that love him. The "royal law" then is for those who are of His kingdom;³ it is the rule of faith for those who have volitionally subjected themselves to the rule of God. This rule of faith, this royal law, consists of ethical instruction, didache. By showing partiality they have committed sin and are convicted as transgressors by νόμος βασιλικός, the rule of faith of those who are of His Kingdom.

Verse ten becomes intelligible in this light. The law

¹Jas. 2:8-13.

²Ropes, op. cit., p. 197.

³Zahn interprets βασιλικός similarly. It is a "law for kings and not for slaves. . . . The heirs of the kingdom (2:5), who are themselves kings (Rev. 1:6, 5:10; I Pet. 2:9), ought to be ashamed to meet the rich with fawning politeness, offered under pretense of due brotherly love, and at the same time dishonour the poor." Introduction, op. cit., I, 116.

again is the rule of faith, which, if a man transgresses at one point, he is guilty of all.¹ The idea of the unity of the law is rabbinic,² but the rabbis drew different conclusions from this solidarity. Some concluded, as does James, that if the law is a unity, whoever breaks it at one point has broken it at all points. Thus we find the statement in TB Shabbath 70.2: "If he do all, but omit one, he is guilty for all severally." The same sentiment is expressed in TB Horavoth 8b: "Whoever is guilty of one is guilty of all."³ Other rabbis drew the quite opposite conclusion that by keeping one commandment of the law a man had kept the whole law,⁴ but this idea seems to have been a later development.⁵ The typical rabbinic

¹Augustine had great difficulty with this verse. In a letter to Jerome (Ep. ad Hier. 167) he discusses the problem at length and draws a comparison with the doctrine of the solidarity of virtues and vices found in Stoicism (*qui unam virtutem, omnes habet, et qui unam non habet, nullam habet*). His solution is that since the whole law hangs on love, every sin is a breach of love.

²There is no exact parallel to this in the Old Testament. The closest thing to it is Deut. 27:26: ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ἄνθρωπος, ὃς οὐκ ἐμμενεί ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς λόγοις τοῦ νόμου τούτου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτούς. Cf. Matt. 5:18, 19.

³Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 755. Gal. 5:3 expresses the same idea.

⁴Cf. Midrash Mishle to Prov. 1:10. Hauck, op. cit., p. 111 and Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 755.

⁵F. F. Bruce writes that "there is some evidence that about A. D. 100 a change arose in the conception of one's duty to observe the whole law. The change may have been largely due to the influence of Rabbi Aqiba. He laid down the principle that the 'world is judged in mercy, and all is according to the amount of work' (Pirque Aboth, 3.19), i. e., according to the

opinion is expressed here by James; however, he baptizes the concept into Christ. Cadoux writes:

" . . . James looks on the law, not as a number of injunctions, but as a personal relationship, . . . not like an examination, where nine right answers will secure a pass, despite a wrong one, but like a friendship, where a hundred faithfulnesses cannot be set against one treachery."¹

It is clear how closely this idea is associated with the Christian concept of fellowship with Christ. The law of Christ is not an impersonal thing. It has to do with a personal relationship with Christ. Transgression of one precept of the Christian rule of faith is a breach of the whole, because it breaks fellowship with the object of faith.

The solidarity of the law is further insisted upon by the statement in v. 11: "For he who said, 'Do not commit adultery,' said also, 'Do not kill.' If you do not commit adultery but do kill, you have become a transgressor of the law." Hort has a fine note on this verse which I quote in full.

It is very unlikely that the two commandments are chosen at random, as though both were unconnected with προσωποληψία. If this were the case there would be no clear and coherent course of thought. It is quite possible that μή μοιχεύτης implies that such sins as adultery were really avoided and condemned by those who dishonoured the poor; and that they made their condemnation of fleshly sins an

preponderance of good or bad in human acts. 'Sometimes he asserted God's mercy to be such that a single meritorious act will win a man admission to the future world' (L. Findelstein, Akiba, p. 185)." The Acts of the Apostles, op. cit., p. 294.

¹Op. cit., p. 72.

excuse for indulgence towards spiritual sins. At all events *μὴ φονεύσης* is directly connected with the matter in hand, because murder is only the extreme want of love to neighbors or brethren. Our Lord (Matt. 5:21-26) had carried back murder to the expression of anger (cf. Jas. 1:19 f.), and though St. Paul (Rom. 13:8, 9) had carried back all commandments of the second table alike to love of the neighbours, the 6th was evidently the most direct expression of the principle common to all, for (v. 10) "love worketh no ill to a neighbor."¹

Here again the Christian influence (through the words of Jesus) asserts itself and is made even more evident by the appeal of v. 12: "So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty." There is a judgment for the Christian and it will be based on his relation to the Christian ethical standard (*didache*), the law for free men. This idea is similar to Paul's warning to the Roman Christians who were critical of their fellow Christians. "Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God,"² and also to the Corinthians, "For we [Christians] must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body."³

There remains one other reference to law in the Epistle:

Do not speak evil against one another,⁴ brethren.
He that speaks evil against a brother or judges his

¹*Op. cit.*, p. 55.

²Rom. 14:10.

³II Cor. 5:10.

⁴Cf. Lev. 19:16; Psa. 50:20; 101:5; Prov. 20:13; Wis. 1:11. There are also some striking statements on the subject

brother,¹ speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one law giver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you that you judge your neighbor?²

The law here is again the Christian law, not the Mosaic law as such. The Christian law, the "law of freedom," of course, would include the moral precepts of the Mosaic legislation. In this passage the interest of the brother and the interest of the law seem to be somehow identified. The Christian brother who is calumniated is identified with the law in so far as his life embodies that law and is personified in him. To slander him is to slander the law and to become a judge of the law.³ Such an action of criticizing the law really expresses an attitude of superiority to the law. But superiority to the law belongs only to God.⁴ He is the one law giver and judge.

of slander in the rabbinical writings. TB Arakin 15b "Whoever speaks slander magnifies iniquities equal to the three sins of idolatry, unchastity and bloodshed." Derek Eretz Zuta 1: "Slander not thy neighbor. For whoever slanders his neighbor, there is no salvation for him." Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., I, 222 ff., 905. Cf. Hauck, op. cit., p. 205.

¹Cf. Matt. 7:1 f. *μὴ κρίνετε, ἵνα μὴ κριθῆτε· ἐν ᾧ γὰρ κρίματι κρίνετε κριθήσεσθε, καὶ ἐν ᾧ μέτρῳ μετρεῖτε μετρηθήσεται ὑμῖν.* Similar sayings are to be found in M Aboth 1:6; 2:4; Derek Eretz Zuta 3, but none of these goes so far as to exclude judging altogether as do the statements of Jesus and James.

²Jas. 4:11, 12

³Cf. Parry's fine but brief treatment of this passage. Op. cit., pp. 30, 31.

⁴Pfleiderer says that when "James . . . speaks of men who 'judge the law' instead of doing it, the criticism applied

Summary.--The Epistle of James is primarily didache, not kerygma. It, like the Mosaic law, emphasizes what man's responsibility is toward God; indeed, the author seems to conceive of Christianity as primarily ethics (didache), though not entirely (cf. 1:18). Law to him is the rule of faith, the law of righteousness for free men (νόμος ἐλευθερίας), revealed and perfected by Jesus Christ (νόμος τέλειος). It is also a royal law, because it is applicable to the heirs of the kingdom, to those who have volitionally placed themselves under the rule of God. Criticism of those who live by this law is criticism of the law itself and is considered an act of presumption, because it reveals an attitude of superiority to the law, which belongs to God alone.

C. Faith and Works

No other aspect of the thought of St. James has received the attention which has been given to faith and its relation to works. This, of course, is due to the seeming contradiction between St. James' doctrine and that of St. Paul, and one must add, the unusual amount of attention given to it by Martin Luther. An investigation of this problem must be based on the over-all concept of faith in the Epistle with special reference to the meaning and importance of faith and works in the Old Testament and Judaism.

by Cerdon and Marcion to the Old Testament is not unnaturally suggested." Op. cit., IV, 303. This seems a bit far-fetched.

1. Faith

We turn first to the Old Testament. There is not a great deal of prominence given to faith in the Old Testament,¹ especially when compared to the New Testament. The Hebrew verb meaning "to believe" is used only forty four times and in only about half of the occurrences with a religious connotation. The form of the verb is Hiphil יִּדְּאֵן from יִדְּאָ and means "'to hold trustworthy, to rely upon, believe' (taking either a simple accusative or one of the prepositions, ל or ע), and is rendered πιστεύω in the LXX, e. g., Gen. 15:6."² The object of faith in the Old Testament when יִּדְּאֵן is used with a religious connotation is "sometimes the words or commandments of God, or a particular word or work of God, or the Divine revelation, or the Divine messengers the prophets, or God Himself in His own Person."³

Old Testament Hebrew had no substantive for faith as an active force.⁴ The nearest thing to it is אֱמוּנָה which

¹For an excellent study of faith in the Old Testament and Judaism with special reference to the Epistle of James cf. A. Meyer, op. cit., pp. 123-138.

²Lightfoot, The Epistle to the Galatians, op. cit., p. 155.

³G. H. Box, "Faith," HDCG, op. cit., I, 568.

⁴B. B. Warfield says that "this circumstance need not in itself possess significance; the notions of 'faith' and 'faithfulness' lie close to one another, and are not uncommonly expressed by a single term (so πίστις, fides, faith)."
"Faith," HDB, I, 827.

really doesn't mean "faith" but "fidelity." The only place in the Old Testament where an active meaning for אֱמוּנָה might be demanded is in the famous statement in Hab. 2:4, "The just shall live by his faith."¹ The LXX translates most often by ἀλήθεια, ἀληθινός and πίστις, πιστός, ἀξιοπιστός. In later Hebrew אֱמוּנָה took on, in addition to the passive meaning, the active meaning "faith." Thus אֱמוּנָה means both "faith" and "faithfulness" like the Greek πίστις.

Faith plays a more important role both in Diaspora and Palestinian Judaism than in the Old Testament. Meyer remarks:

. . . man hat neuerdings besser erkennen gelernt, welch grosse Bedeutung der Glaube auch in Judentum gewonnen hat. Gewiss redet man in Judentum mehr von der Thora und dem Halten ihrer Gebote als vom Glauben; aber das Verhältniss zu Gott und seinem Gesetz wird in zunehmender Masse auch als Glaube gekennzeichnet.²

The Fourth Book of Maccabees records the words of a mother to her seven sons who are about to be martyred. She calls to their remembrance Abraham, Isaac, Daniel, Ananias, Azarias, and Mishaël as examples of faith, and exhorts her sons: "And ye, having the same faith unto God, be not troubled; for it were against Reason that ye, knowing righteousness, should not withstand the pains."³ She and her seven sons become an "example

¹ אֱמוּנָה may have a transitional or double sense here. Cf. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 155.

²Op. cit., p. 123.

³IV Macc. 16:22 f. Cf. 15:24.

of the nobleness of faith."¹ The Wisdom of Solomon associates "trust" or "belief" with understanding: "They that trust on him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love."² Chastisement is for the purpose of turning the wicked to faith in God: "Therefore thou dost chastise by little and little them that fall from the right way, . . . that escaping from their wickedness they may believe on thee, O Lord,"³ and God slackens his chastisement of the faithful, "For the creation, ministering to thee its maker, straineth its force against the unrighteous, for punishment, and slackeneth it in behalf of them that trust in thee, for beneficence."⁴ Bousset summarizes the concept of faith in Diaspora Judaism as follows: "Den Mittelpunkt der Frommigkeit bildet der Glaube, die Erhebung der Sinne und Gedanken zu Gott, dem Schöpfer des Daseins, dem man alles verdankt, um dessentwillen man alles duldet."⁵

For Philo⁶ faith is the queen (βασις) of virtues.⁷

¹IV Macc. 17:2.

²Wis. 3:9.

³Wis. 12:2. Cf. 12:17. ⁴Wis. 16:24.

⁵Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, Band 21, 3 Aufl.; hrsg. von H. Gressman; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1926), p. 194. For references to faith in Josephus and Aristaeus cf. A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 127 f.

⁶For a discussion of faith in Philo cf. A. Meyer, op. cit., pp. 128-130 and W. Bousset, op. cit., pp. 194 ff.

⁷De Abr. 270.

It is also the most certain (βεβαιότατη)¹ or the most perfect (τελειότατη) of the virtues,² a perfect good (ἀγαθὸν τέλειον).³ Wolfson⁴ states that Philo understands faith in God to include three things:

- (1) belief in the unity⁵ and providence of God;⁶
- (2) belief in truths revealed directly by God;⁷
- (3) trust in God.⁸ All these three meanings are logically interrelated, and it is faith in all these three meanings that he has in mind when he says that "faith in God is one sure and infallible good"⁹ or when he describes "faith in the Existent" as "the queen of virtues."¹⁰

In Palestinian Judaism the investigation of the concept of faith presents special difficulties because, as Bousset remarks:

Es oft sehr schwer zu erkennen ist, ob bei der Erwähnung des Glaubens wesentlich nur das Vertrauen, das den Frommen vom Nichtfrommen unterscheidet (vgl. a. B. Sir. 2:10 f., 4:16; 11:21, 32 35 24), nur die Treue in Betracht kommt, oder ob wirklich der Glaube als Akt des persönlichen Sichbekennens zu Gott gemeint ist. Der Umstand, dass die meisten Zeugnissen nur in Uebersetzungen vorliegen, erhöht die Schwierigkeit.¹¹

¹De Virt. 216. ²Quis Rer. Div. Her. 91.

³De Migr. Abr. 44.

⁴Philo (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947), II, 218.

⁵Cf. De Virt. 216. Quis Rer. Div. Her. 92.

⁶Cf. De Virt. 216. ⁷Cf. Leg. Alleg. III, 228.

⁸Cf. Quis Rer. Div. Her. 100, 101.

⁹De Abr. 268. ¹⁰Ibid., 270.

¹¹Op. cit., p. 195. Cf. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 157.

In the Book of Enoch unbelief is the chief sin of the kings and the mighty: "And their faith is in the gods which they have made with their hands, and they deny the name of the Lord of Spirits."¹ In the judgment they admit: "We have not believed before Him, nor glorified the name of the Lord of Spirits."² Faith is used in connection with wisdom, patience, mercy, judgment, peace and goodness in 61:11. The "holy who dwell on the earth" are described as those who "believe in the name of the Lord of Spirits for ever and ever."³ The Book of Judith ascribes faith to the heathen Achior who "believed in God exceedingly."⁴

Meyer points out that in the later apocalyptic books the relationship of faith to fidelity toward the law, and the bearing of faith on future reward is especially emphasized.⁵ Thus in IV Ezra 7:83 we read: "They shall see the reward laid up for those who have believed the covenants of the Most High." Of particular significance is the formula "works and faith" found in this apocalypse. "And every one that shall (then) be saved, and shall be able to escape on account of his works or his faith by which he has believed, such shall survive from

The difficulty really is not as great as it might appear, since in Jewish thought fidelity to God was inseparable from confidence in God. Cf. Moore, op. cit., II, 238.

¹I Enoch 46:7. Cf. 67:8, 10, 13.

²Ibid., 63:7.

³Ibid., 43:4.

⁴Jud. 14:10.

⁵Op. cit., p. 125.

the perils aforesaid."¹ Similarly in 13:23: "He that shall bring the peril in that time will himself keep them that fall into peril, even such as have works and faith towards the Mighty One." Undoubtedly the over-emphasis in Judaism on the keeping of the Law prevented the concept of faith from coming to the fore in all its fulness, but the formulas above indicate that faith (here probably in both its active and passive senses) was assuming great importance.² The Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch emphasizes the reward of faith. 54:16: "For assuredly he who believeth will receive reward." 54:21: "For at the consummation of the world vengeance shall be taken upon those who have done wickedness according to their wickedness, and thou wilt glorify the faithful according to their faithfulness." 59:2: "The lamp of the eternal law shone on all those who sat in darkness, which announced to them that believe the promise of their reward." Of special importance to the Jewish concept of faith and its relation to law is 54:5b: "And revealest what is hidden to the pure, who in faith have submitted themselves to Thee and Thy law." The important point here is that faith and the law are not set in opposition to each other³ as is further revealed by 48:22: "In Thee do

¹IIV Ezra 9:7.

²Bousset, op. cit., p. 195. Cf. IV Ezra 5:1, 6:5, 6:28; 7:34, 131.

³Cf. A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 126.

we trust, for lo! Thy law is with us, and we know that we shall not fall so long as we keep Thy statutes."

Faith also plays an important role in the rabbinical writings. The rabbis praised the virtues of faith: "Great indeed is faith before him who spoke and the world came into being."¹ Faith is trust in God for daily provision: "R. El-eazar used to say: He who has enough to eat for today and says: 'What will I eat tomorrow?' Behold he is of little faith."² The Mekilta further states that it was only those of little faith among the Israelites who went out to gather manna on the seventh day.³ Great emphasis is placed on the merit and reward of faith. Faith was the means by which Abraham inherited this world and the world to come,⁴ and Israel was redeemed from Egypt only as a reward for the faith with which they believed.⁵ The Holy Spirit rested on Israel as

¹Mekilta Beshallah 7 on Ex. 14:31 (I, 253). This halachic midrash contains the most comprehensive passage on faith in the writings of the rabbis.

²Mekilta Vayassa 3 on Ex. 16:4 (II, 103).

³Ibid., 5 on Ex. 16:27 (II, 120). Cf. TB Sota 48b: "Whoever has a morsel of bread in his basket and says, 'What shall I eat to-morrow?' belongs to those who are small of faith." Cohen, op. cit., p. 85.

⁴Ibid., p. 253.

⁵Ibid., 4 on Ex. 14:15 (p. 220). "The faith with which they believed in Me is deserving that I should divide the sea for them." The Jewish doctrine of the merits of the fathers carrying over to following generations is evident here too, for in the same passage we read: "The faith with which their father Abraham believed in me is deserving that I should divide the sea for them."

the result of their faith,¹ and there is the promise that the "people of the diaspora will be assembled again in the future only as a reward of faith."²

A. Meyer shows that in the rabbinical writings there is no opposition between "Verdienst aus dem Gesetz (זכרון תורה) und Verdienst aus dem Glauben (זכרון אמונה)."³ The merit of the faith of Israel lay in the fact that Israel obeyed the command of God through Moses. "For they did not say to Moses: How can we go out into the desert without having provisions for the journey? But they believed in Moses and followed him."⁴ Ultimately all the 613 commandments were reduced to the one commandment of faith. Six hundred and thirteen commandments were addressed to Moses,

. . . David came and reduced them to eleven principles, which are enumerated in Psa. 15. Isaiah came and reduced them to six; as it is said, "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from looking upon evil" (Isa. 33:15). Micah came and reduced them to three; as it is written, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8). Isaiah subsequently reduced them to two, as it is said, "Thus saith the Lord, keep ye justice and do righteousness" (Isa. 56:1). Lastly came Habakkuk and reduced them to one; as it is said "The righteous shall live by his faith." (Hab. 2:4).⁵

¹Ibid., p. 252.

²Ibid., p. 254.

³Op. cit., p. 133.

⁴Mekilta Beshallah 4 on Ex. 14:15 (I, 222). Cf. Mekilta Pisha 14 on Ex. 12:39 (I, 110).

⁵TB Makkoth 24a. Cohen, op. cit., p. 85.

Despite this reduction of all the commandments to the single one of faith, a differentiation between faith and the observation of the Torah was maintained by the rabbis. It was for the sake of faith and in the power of faith that one received the command and observed it.¹

The faith of Israel brought into play the miraculous power of God. Thus the Mekilta explains the incident concerning Moses lifting up his hands during the battle with Amalek:

Now could Moses' hands make Israel victorious or could his hands break Amalek? It merely means this: When Moses raised his hands towards heaven, the Israelites would look at him and believe in him who commanded Moses to do so; then God would perform for them miracles and mighty deeds.²

In the same passage the incident relating to the brazen serpent is similarly explained:

Now, could that serpent kill or make alive? It merely means this: When Moses did so, the Israelites would look at him and believe in Him who commanded Moses to do so; then God would send them healing.³

Sufficient has been said about the concept of faith in Judaism to show how similar it is to that found in the Epistle of James. "Faith" in James is the basic element of piety (1:3; cf. 2:5), the belief in God, not merely in the existence of God, but in his character as being good and benevolent in his relations towards men (1:6 with 1:13). Faith includes belief

¹A. Meyer, op. cit., p. 134.

²Mekilta Amalek 1 on Ex. 17:11 (II, 143).

³Ibid., p. 144.

in the power of God, in His ability to perform miraculous acts, and it is closely associated with prayer (5:15, 16; cf. 1:6). These passages illustrate James' dynamic concept of faith and as a whole show clearly James' intimate contact with Judaism. Meyer tries to show that the treatment of faith in the Epistle nowhere goes beyond the bounds of Judaism. Faith in one God before whom the demons tremble, faith in the Lord of Glory who does not respect persons, faith which prays for wisdom and for healing, faith which is proved through trials and purified through patience, the example of Abraham and Rahab, even the reward of faith (though only indirectly mentioned by James, cf. 1:12 with 1:3) are all Judaistic as well as Christian teachings.

One cannot find in any passage in the Epistle, with the exception of 2:1, teaching concerning faith in Christ, either as the exalted Son of Man who is coming again or as the eternal Son of God.¹ Meyer's researches are helpful in showing how similar the concepts in the Epistle are to those in Judaism but he goes too far. To maintain his thesis it is necessary to read out of the Epistle all references to Christianity including the crucial one found in 2:1, Ἀδελφοί μου, μὴ ἐν προσωπολημψίαις ἔχετε τὴν πίστιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης. This passage is of particular importance to our

¹Ibid., p. 144.

discussion of the concept of faith. Spitta,¹ followed by A. Meyer,² takes the words ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ to be an interpolation because of the difficult genitive (τῆς δόξης) following, and because the simple ὁ κύριος τῆς δόξης can be paralleled in the Jewish writings, particularly in the Book of Enoch, e. g., 22:14: ἡυλόγησα τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης ; 25:3: ὁ μέγας κύριος τῆς δόξης ; 27:5: ἡυλόγησα τὸν κύριον τῆς δόξης καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ ἐδήλωσα καὶ ὕμνησα.³ There are undoubtedly incidences of the interpolation of the name of Christ in the New Testament, e. g., Jas. 5:14; II Thess. 1:1; Col. 1:2, but sufficient reason has not been brought forward to postulate an interpolation here. The only textual variants consist in the placing of τῆς δόξης after πίστιν (69, 73, 206, 1518, a, c and the Peshitta) and the omitting of τῆς δόξης altogether (13, and the Sahidic). It is only Spitta's theory of the pre-Christian Jewish origin of the Epistle which necessitates an interpolation. The text surely does not warrant it.⁴ The faith thus spoken of here is not merely faith in God but faith

¹Op. cit., pp. 4 ff.

²Op. cit., pp. 118 ff.

³Cf. also I Enoch 40:3; 63:2; 81:3. Similar phrases occur in the Old Testament Psalms. Cf. Ps. 28:3: ὁ θεὸς τῆς δόξης and Ps. 23:7-10: ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης.

⁴In addition to the fact that the textual evidence being against an interpolation here, it is very doubtful that a Christian interpolator would have been satisfied to insert only the words ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ here and Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in 1:1.

directed towards the Lord Jesus Christ, the glory.¹ It is not certain how the genitive τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ qualifies ἡ πίστις. Rendall suggests the possibility of regarding the genitive as qualitative, "as defining the particular character of their faith in God. 'The faith in God which has for its support and content our Lord Jesus Christ,' that is the Christian kind of faith in God."² It is probably easier, however, to take the genitive as objective--"your faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." Whichever way it is taken, the faith is dynamic faith, trust, directed towards the Lord Jesus Christ and has nothing whatever to do with the later idea of a body of doctrine to be believed.

One further word must be said concerning the concept of faith in the Epistle, and this bears on its relationship to the teaching of Jesus. Abundant passages in the Synoptic Gospels reveal that Jesus had a concept of faith similar to what we find in James. For Him also, faith meant access to the divine power and is often associated with healing. Such statements as: "All things are possible to him who believes"³; "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you receive it, and you will"⁴; "Daughter, your faith has made

¹ τῆς δόξης is appositional to the whole phrase and indicates the existence of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Shekinah of God. Cf. G. Kittel, TWzNT, op. cit., II, 249.

²Op. cit., p. 46.

³Mk. 9:23.

⁴Mk. 11:24

you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease,"¹ reveal a dynamic concept of faith strikingly similar to that of St. James.

2. Faith and Works

The only other passage in which faith is mentioned in the Epistle is the famous passage 2:14-26, and here faith and works are contrasted. The passage is obviously a polemical one, probably practical, not theological. Against whom or what is the passage directed?

Some have suggested that it is an attempt to refute St. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith on the basis of the similar formulas used by both writers. Paul, like James, places together πίστις and ὥσαυτε (Rom. 10:9; Jas. 2:14), both use the phrase ἐξ ἔργων δικαιοῦσθαι (Rom. 4:2; Jas. 2:21, 24), both contrast ἐξ ἔργων with ἐκ πίστεως (Gal. 2:16; Jas. 2:24), both use the formula πίστις χωρὶς ἔργων (Rom. 3:28; Jas. 2:20), and, of course, both use the example of Abraham (Rom. 4:1-15; Jas. 2:21-23). It is difficult, however, despite these similarities, to believe that James is here attempting to refute Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. The two stand basically in agreement. For both James and Paul faith finds its object in the Lord Jesus Christ, and both are agreed that the first thing to do with faith is to live by it. The faith of

¹Mk. 5:34.

which James speaks in 2:14-26 is really not faith at all in the true Hebraic sense of confidence and trust in God which ~~elicits~~ appropriate action. It is not recognized as true faith by James (Cf. ἐὰν πίστιν λέγει τις ἔχειν) and would not be considered such by Paul. Dibelius writes, "es ist unmöglich, dass der Verf. der Römerbrief auf diese Weise bekämpft hätte, wenn er ihn gründlich gelesen und verstanden hätte."¹ This becomes even clearer when one considers James' use of works as compared with Paul's. When Paul speaks of works, in Galatians, e. g., his primary reference is to the works of the ceremonial law. He has in mind the Jewish doctrine of works as a means of salvation. With James "works" are works of faith, the ethical outworking of true piety and include especially the "work of love" (2:8).² Works of this kind are also to be found in the practical sections of the Pauline epistles.

Dibelius, although he thinks that the Epistle arose in a type of Christianity not directly influenced by Paul, cannot conceive of the passage 2:14-26 without Paul's formula "faith

¹Op. cit., p. 167.

²Cf. Schrenk, TWzNT, op. cit., II, 221: "The reference is not to carrying out the particulars of the law in a Rabbinical sense, but to practical love and obedience, the kind of thing that Paul calls the fruit of the Spirit, the distinguishing characteristic of a Christian. The entire Epistle teaches the same lesson, which is as far removed from the Jewish idea of earning merit as from Greek ethics. James simply demands in a direct, untheological way, that faith shall not be distorted into a substitute for works."

without works."¹ Some would go further than Dibelius and completely sever any connection between the passage and the Apostle Paul. Those who hold this view assume either a very late date (2nd century) or a very early date (before A. D. 50).

The late date, with special reference to the passage under discussion, has from time to time been associated with the contention that the Epistle reveals an anti-Gnostic tendency. This view was originally suggested by the Tübingen scholars A. Schweigler, H. Weinels and O. Pfleiderer and has recently been revived by A. Schramberger² and, following him, J. Schoeps.³ Schramberger will not allow that the Epistle arose before the great debate concerning the ceremonial law and asks, Where can we find Jewish Christianity which did not include Jewish ritual and considered ethics as generally unnecessary and yet emphasized the saving power of faith?⁴ It is unthinkable that the readers could be Jewish Christians who had not been influenced by the teaching of Paul. Gentile Christians who, on the basis of a misunderstanding of Paul were led into anti-nomianism (Cf. I Cor. 6:12; 8:10, are excluded because: (1) We find ourselves already in a time when the teaching of Paul on justification by faith is no longer understood, and this phenomenon is always found in the later, not the earlier, literature; (2) "faith" in the Epistle of

¹Op. cit., p. 167. ²Op. cit.

³Op. cit., pp. 343 ff. ⁴Op. cit., p. 40.

James is intellectual assent, belief in one God, i. e., "watered-down" faith which Paul wouldn't even recognize as faith;¹ (3) the author of the Epistle lashes out in his polemic against justification by faith.²

Schrammberger further reminds us that a characteristic of the post-apostolic age was that good works must be added to faith. Abundant references are given.³ I Clem. is especially cited to show that the error of depreciating good works was the result of the teaching of false prophets.⁴ These are the Gnostics, and it is against these that 2:14-26 is addressed.⁵

¹This is also the view of H. A. A. Kennedy. "For Paul, as we know, faith meant complete surrender of the whole being to Jesus Christ, who had loved men and given Himself for them. As such, it brought into play every energy of the soul, and established a contact of all with the Divine life in Christ. Thus on the human side, it constitutes the fundamental attitude in salvation. All of God's saving gifts are received by faith. But as soon as the experience of Christ becomes less rich and profound, . . . faith is apt to pass over into the sense of an acceptance of the truth of the Gospel, . . . and even more generally the belief that God will do as He has said. . . . Hence the possibility of the arresting statement in the Epistle of James that 'faith without works is dead' (2:20). Such a statement would be inconceivable in Paul. The later writer makes it the theme of an earnest discussion, thus indicating the process through which the conception has passed. Just because faith is no longer regarded as the vital energy of the entire Christian life, good works have to be demanded as an additional obligation which makes up what may hitherto have been lacking." The Theology of the Epistles (London: Duckworth, 1919), pp. 229 f.

²Op. cit., p. 41.

³Ibid., pp. 41 f.

⁴Ibid., pp. 43 f.

⁵"Mit κενός ἄνθρωπος Jc. 2:20 ist der Gegner, der Gnostiker, gemeint; wie seine Weisheit ψυχική ist, so ist er selbst κενός; er ist nicht πνευματικός." Ibid., p. 44.

Schammbberger is right when he asserts that 2:14-26 is inexplicable apart from Paul, but to say that Paul was only misunderstood in post-apostolic times is to overlook such passages as Rom. 3:8; 6:1 and II Peter 3:15, 16. James' practical purpose excludes any need for references to the ceremonial law. He is writing to Christians who have been influenced by Paul's preaching and who, through a misunderstanding of his doctrine of justification by faith, have emphasized faith's saving power to the almost exclusion of the ethical outworking of that faith. As for the necessity to emphasize good works along with orthodoxy of belief, Matt. 3:8, 9; 7:21; and Rom. 2:17-24 all bear witness to the need for this teaching in the early days of the church.¹ One must concur with the judgment of H. Preisker who says that with the possible exception of the use of ἀνθρώποις κενέ Schammbberger can construe 2:14-26 as an anti-Gnostic polemic only by introducing very subjective parallels.²

James' famous passage on faith and works may also be understood apart from Paul by assuming a very early date. When this is done it is necessary to explain 2:14-26 by allusions to passages on faith and works in Jewish writers.

¹Cf. Ropes, op. cit., p. 14: "We have no right to infer from the faults of James' readers a relatively late stage in their Christian history."

²Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, 3 Aufl.; op. cit., p. 147.

Lightfoot,¹ Dibelius² and A. Meyer³ have shown that Gen. 15:6 was an often discussed theme in the Jewish writings. It might therefore be proposed that Paul and James are dealing independently with a subject which was frequently debated among the Jews. But Sanday and Headlam point out: "It is true that the bearing of Gen. 15:6 was a subject of standing debate among the Jews; but the same thing cannot be said of the antithesis of Faith and Works."⁴ No illustrations of this antithesis from the Jewish writings have been forthcoming. Bousset reminds us that it wasn't something new for Paul to deal with the problem of faith and works; "Das Neue lag in der kraftigen Entgegensetzung: Glaube und nicht Werke, entweder Glaube oder Werke."⁵

The best solution is to regard the passage as directed against a misunderstanding of Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. The fact that James quotes exactly Paul's formula

¹Op. cit., pp. 158-161. ²Op. cit., pp. 157-163.

³Op. cit., pp. 135-137.

⁴The Epistle to the Romans, op. cit., p. 105.

⁵Schrenk, in TWzNT, op. cit., II, 223 says: "The problem of faith and works and the terminology of the discussion, remind us of Paul, but it is not necessary to think that they come from him, or that this is a polemic against pseudo-Paulinism or a misunderstanding of Paul. The similarity is due to the fact that both writers were familiar with the rabbinical tradition." But one may well ask, With what rabbinical tradition? There are no Jewish parallels cited in the commentaries, including Strack-Billerbeck, to illustrate the antithesis between faith and works.

(2:21, 24. Cf. Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:28) is decisive enough. Now it does not necessarily follow that there is a literary connection between James and Paul. As has been shown above,¹ the misunderstanding of Paul's teaching which is being refuted by James could have arisen as the result of Paul's preaching ministry at Antioch (Acts 11:26) before any of his letters were written. It is not difficult to see how Jews who all their life long had been taught the efficacy of works, when hearing and receiving the message of the grace of God as preached by Paul, might have been tempted to depreciate the value of works to the degree that very little emphasis was being placed upon them. Or it is possible that the passage is directed against her^{ay} reports of Paul's preaching that had come to James' ears. However, in the light of the vivid illustration of 2:15, 16, it appears that the misunderstanding had been translated into actual life situations. The whole passage seems to reveal a knowledge by the author of the explicit circumstances of his readers. Hort writes: "it seems more natural to suppose that a misuse or misunderstanding of St. Paul's teaching on the part of others gave rise to St. James' carefully guarded language."²

¹cf. p. 59.

²Judaistic Christianity (London: Macmillan and Co., 1898), p. 148.

D. Wisdom

James' treatment of wisdom also reveals the basic Judaic tone of the Epistle, but it is not without its Christian influences. In two separate passages this subject emerges.¹ Jas. 1:5 reads: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him." James, of course, is not using wisdom here in the mystical or philosophical sense. It is not ἐπιστήμη θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν τούτων αἰτιῶν. Wisdom here, as in the Jewish tradition, is primarily practical, not philosophical. Maynard Smith writes:

To understand the idea of Wisdom in the mind of S. James, we must seek the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and Apocrypha. It is neither reasoning power nor an apprehension of intellectual problems. It has nothing to do with the questions why or how. It is a perception of facts in their true bearings. It enables us to seize the good in things seeming evil, to act aright amid unsolved problems.²

Now there are two points relative to wisdom which are emphasized in this passage: (1) it is to be sought by earnest prayer; (2) it is a gift from God. Both of these ideas find their roots in the Wisdom literature of the Jews. Wis. 7:7

¹Windisch observes that although the entire Epistle is Weisheitslehre, σοφία is expressly mentioned in only two passages. Op. cit., p. 6.

²Op. cit., p. 49. Hort's definition of wisdom in Jas. 1:5 also emphasizes the practical side: "It is the endowment of heart and mind which is needed for the righteous conduct of life." Op. cit., p. 7.

reads: "For this cause I prayed, and understanding was given me: I called upon God, and there came to me a spirit of wisdom."¹ Prov. 2:6 declares, probably in connection with II Chron. 1:10-12: "For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh understanding." The same theme is found in the first chapter of Ecclesiasticus: "All wisdom cometh from the Lord, and is with Him for ever."² It also occurs in the rabbinical writings.³

The other passage in our Epistle which deals with the subject of wisdom is more extensive and gives rise to some difficult problems. The passage runs as follows:

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good life let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This wisdom is not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity. And the harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.⁴

¹Wis. 9:4.

²Eccclus. 1:1. Cf. 1:10.

³Oesterley, EGT, op. cit., IV, 423 cites TB Berakoth 58b: "Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast imparted of Thy wisdom to flesh and blood." Oesterley thinks that the words "flesh and blood" indicate that the reference is to Gentiles as well as Jews and corresponds to the παρὲν of Jas. 1:5.

⁴Jas. 3:13-18.

The passage cited above grows out of an admonition to teachers (2:1) and a warning on the use of the tongue (2:2-12). The teacher is described as σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων,¹ the former word probably being a technical one for the professional wise man or teacher, while the words which follow refer to the standard or ideal to be maintained by him.² By his good life (ἐκ τῆς καλῆς ἀνατροφῆς) he is to show his works in the meekness (πραΰτης) of wisdom.³ The pride of knowledge has always been the besetting sin of professional teachers. The Jewish rabbis recognized this. Cohen writes:

One class of pride was singled out for special warning, viz. the pride of scholarship. Since the greatest value was attached to learning and the highest honours paid to those who possessed it, they were particularly liable to succumb to the vice of self-glorification. For that reason, the idea that humility must accompany knowledge finds frequent mention.⁴

This pride of knowledge in the case of James' readers gave vent to bitter jealousy, and selfish ambition, which in

¹ ἐπιστήμων is used only here in the New Testament. It carries with it the idea of expert knowledge in both classical and koine Greek. σοφός and ἐπιστήμων seem to be used synonymously in Deut. 1:13 and 4:6. Cf. Eccclus. 19:22.

²Cf. Ropes, op. cit., p. 244. Some commentators find no connection between 3:13-18 and with what immediately precedes and thus do not restrict the application of the passage to teachers. Dibelius, with his piece-meal approach to the Epistle is, of course, one of them.

³Cf. Eccclus. 3:17: τέκνον, ἐν πραΰτητι τὰ ἔργα σου διέξαγε.

⁴Op. cit., p. 231 where citations from the rabbinical writings are given. Cf. Moore, op. cit., II, 245, 273 ff.

turn resulted in boasting and being thus "false to the truth" (ψευδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας). James does not mean here that the teachers were departing from orthodox doctrine, but rather by their boasting and by their inconsistent living they were giving a lie to the truth of the Gospel. The error is practical, not theological.¹

This wisdom is characterized in v. 15 as "not such as comes down from above," and to it three descriptive adjectives are given (ἐπίγειος, ψυχική, δαιμονιώδης). It is this verse, with its description of οὐκ ἡ σοφία ἀνθρώπων κατερχομένη which is taken by some scholars to reveal an anti-Gnostic tendency in the Epistle of James. Schrammberger considers v. 15 "die deutlichste Spur vom Gnostizismus" in the entire Epistle.² Since some of the most recent critical treatments of the Epistle of James have largely accepted Schrammberger's thesis,³ we

¹Zahn says that the error consists "in the fact that one who claims to be a knower and teacher of revealed truth opposes himself to others, thereby showing a lack of wisdom and gentleness which necessarily flow from the real possession of the truth." Intro., op. cit., I, 96.

²Pfleiderer also put special emphasis on this verse as an indication of the anti-Gnostic character of the Epistle. "When he calls the false wisdom psychic (3:15), he does so doubtless in opposition to those who professed themselves, on the ground of their higher gnosis, to be the true "Pneumatics." Op. cit., IV, 302.

³In particular Schoeps, op. cit., p. 344 f. and Preisner in the 3rd edition of Windisch's Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, op. cit., p. 148. Neither of these goes as far as Schrammberger, however. He finds anti-Gnostic statements everywhere in the Epistle and thinks that a unity (Einheitlichkeit) can be discovered in the Epistle on this basis.

turn to a brief consideration of it relative to this passage on wisdom.

Schammburger finds a parallel to Jas. 3:13 in I Clem. 38:2: "Let the wise manifest his wisdom not in words but in good deeds," and Titus 1:16: "They profess to know God but deny him by their deeds." When James speaks of this "not from above wisdom" as being "earthly, unspiritual and devilish," he is not refuting a practical error. It is false doctrine (Irrlehre¹) that he has in mind. The Epistle of Jude similarly refutes false teaching which Schammburger identifies as "libertine Gnosticism." In particular he points to the statement in Jude 19: *ψυχικοί, πνεῦμα μὴ ἔχοντες*, which he likens to Jas. 3:13-14, where the author, in light of a lack of evidence of good living on the part of his hearers, concludes that they do not possess the *σοφία ἄνωθεν*. Their wisdom is *ἐπίγειος, ψυχική, δαιμονιώδης*.²

Hermas also affords similarities. The author of this second century work is, according to Schammburger, opposing the Gnostic heretics.³ Especially significant are Hermas' pronouncements concerning how to differentiate between the true and false prophets. Mand. XI, 8:

In the first place, he who has the spirit which is from above (*τὸ ἄνωθεν*), is meek and gentle, and lowly-minded, and refrains from all wickedness and desire

¹Op. cit., p. 34.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 35.

of this world, and makes himself poorer than all men, and gives no answers to anyone when he is consulted, nor does he speak by himself (for the Holy Spirit does not speak when a man wishes to speak), but he speaks at that time when God wishes him to speak.

Mand. XI, 11:

Listen, now, said he, concerning the spirit which is earthly, and empty (ἐπίγειος καὶ κενός), and has no power, but is foolish. In the first place, that man who seems to have a spirit exalts himself and wishes to have the first place, and he is instantly impudent and shameless and talkative, and lives in great luxury and in many other deceits, and accepts rewards for his prophecy, and if he does not receive them he does not prophecy.

Mand. XI, 16:

You have the life of both the prophets. Test then, from his life and deeds, the man who says that he is inspired. But believe yourself in the Spirit which comes from God and has power, but have no faith in the spirit which is from the earth and emptiness, because there is no power in it, for it comes from the devil.¹

Schammburger especially points to the expressions τὸ ἄνωθεν, ἐπίγειος, and κενός as revealing the anti-Gnostic character of the Epistle.² These expressions, common to James and the second century Christian literature, cannot be explained by postulating literary dependence. They occur in James for the same reason as they do in Hermas, or Jude. They are Schlagworte which all three authors are using against a common foe. That foe is Gnosticism, which was claiming for itself a σοφία

¹Cf. Herm. Mand. IX, 11; XI, 3, 6.

²Schammburger, op. cit., p. 36.

ἄνωθεν, but which was denied by James to have had its origin ἄνωθεν and was in fact "earthly, unspiritual, devilish."

The weakness of Schammburger's thesis rests in the fact that the parallels he cites from second century Christian writings are not always apropos, and he completely overlooks the pre-Christian and earlier Christian parallels to the passage. Ropes has shown that I Clem. 38:2 is not as close a parallel to Jas. 3:13 as might be supposed.¹ In the James passage the wise man is called upon to show forth his meekness, whereas in I Clement he is challenged to prove his wisdom, and in the Titus passage (1:16) which Schammburger cites, wisdom is not associated with works at all.

It is not necessary to turn to post-apostolic writings to find parallels to the idea that a close relationship must exist between wisdom and deeds. Eccus. 19:20 reads: "All wisdom is the fear of the Lord, and all wisdom is the fulfilling of the Law."

Ψυχικός, as used by James, occurs in the New Testament in addition to the passage in Jude cited by Schammburger, in the Pauline writings. In I Cor. 2:14 he writes: ψυχικὸς δὲ ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ. Here Paul, in a manner very similar to James, uses ψυχικός in opposition to πνευματικός. It follows that if this word was familiar and understandable to the readers of one of Paul's earlier letters,

¹Op. cit., p. 244.

it is not necessary to find in it a Gnostic Schlagwort.¹

The contrast between the "wisdom from above" and earthly wisdom is found in Philo:

The earthly food is produced with the co-operation of husbandmen, but the heavenly is sent like the snow by God the solely self-acting, with none to share his work. And indeed it says "Behold I rain upon you bread from heaven" (Ex. 16:4). Of what food can he rightly say that it is rained from above (τίνα οὖν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ τροφὴν ἐν δίκῳς νέσθαι λέγει, ὅτι μὴ τὴν οὐρανίον σοφίαν; ἣν ἄνωθεν ἐπιπέμπει. . . 2).

As we have seen, the closely associated idea that wisdom comes from God is a common Jewish teaching.³

Finally, a consideration of the use of ἐπίγειος in Paul reveals a similarity to its use in the Epistle of James. Paul describes the enemies of the cross of Christ as οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονούντες⁴; thus, like James, he uses ἐπίγειος as opposed to οὐρανίος.⁵

¹Hort thinks that Paul, James and Jude took the word ψυχικός from the Greek religious language of Palestine. Op. cit., p. 84. Dibelius, although he can find no traces of an anti-Gnostic polemic in the Epistle, regards ψυχικός as a technical Gnostic expression which the author has taken up and used in a non-technical sense. Op. cit., p. 195.

²De Mutat. Nom. 259 f. Cf. De Prof. 30: εὐτρεπισμένην εἶρε σοφίαν, ἄνωθεν ὑμνηθεῖσαν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ. The rabbis declared that "the reflection of the wisdom from above is the Torah." Bereshith Rabbah 17. Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 757.

³See above, pp. 187 f. ⁴Phil. 3:19.

⁵Spitta, op. cit., p. 106, cites Enoch 41:3 as a parallel to "earthly wisdom." The two previous verses are of interest since they speak of true wisdom. The whole passage runs: "Wisdom found no place where she might dwell; then a dwelling

The wisdom from above in Jas. 3:17 is the same as that which is spoken of in 1:15; it is the gift of God as the result of believing prayer. It is practical wisdom, wisdom which preserves unity and peace, wisdom in the true Jewish sense. If the description here goes beyond the Jewish concept of wisdom, it would probably be in connection with the attributes ascribed in v. 17 to her¹: "pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity." It is tempting to conclude with Windisch who, on the basis of the similarity of v. 17 with Gal. 5:22, 23, thinks that the author of the Epistle of James is identifying wisdom with the Holy Spirit.² But whatever we make of σοφία here, it certainly is not necessary to see in the passage an attack on the second century Gnostics.³

place was assigned her in the heavens. Wisdom went forth to make her dwelling among the children of men, and found no dwelling place: Wisdom returned to her place, and took her seat among the angels. And unrighteousness went forth from her chambers: Whom she sought not she found, and dwelt with them, as rain in a desert and dew on a thirsty land."

¹Cf., however, Wis. 7:22-25.

²Op. cit., p. 26. L. Dewar offers another interpretation. He suggests Wisdom in 3:17 is in reality Christ, and thus the long list of descriptive adjectives refer to Him. An Outline of New Testament Ethics (London: University of London Press, 1949), pp. 263 f. In the light of the early identification of Christ with the Wisdom of God this is not impossible. Cf. Davies, op. cit., pp. 147 ff.

³Perhaps we will have to revise our ideas as to the time of origin of the concepts which have been traditionally associated with Gnosticism or at least incipient Gnosticism. Dr. Albright, writing concerning the Gospel of John and Gnosti-

E. Eschatology

Salmond observes that the author of the Epistle has comparatively little to say about the things of the end,¹ but when we remember that the Epistle is a very short one and recall James' significant omissions, it is striking that anything at all is mentioned of eschatology. Schlatter regards James' eschatological pronouncements as particularly significant:

Er [Jacobus] kann christlichen Unterricht geben, ohne zu erzählen was Jesus getan hat, ohne die Hörer zum Kreuz Jesus zu führen, ohne ihnen seine Auferstehung zu bezeugen; sie haben das sie rettende Wort gehört. Aber vom kommenden den Christus muss er reden. Christliche Lehre, die nicht vom Kommenden spräche, gibt es nicht.²

Actually James has much to say of an eschatological

cism, says: "With the publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1948 . . . we now have remarkably close parallels to the conceptual imagery of John in the new Essene documents from the last century and a half before Jesus' ministry. To be sure, parallels have been noted in the earlier sectarian Jewish literature . . . But in our new scrolls we have much closer contacts with both John and Paul, especially the former. Most striking is the simple cosmic dualism common to both: God against Satan; light against darkness; 'truth, right,' against 'falsehood, deception, error'; 'good, holy,' against 'evil, wicked'; 'flesh' against 'spirit,' etc." "The Bible After Twenty Years of Archeology," Religion in Life, XXI (1952), p. 549. If Albright's dating of these Essene documents is correct, so-called Gnostic ideas will have to be conceded a much earlier appearance than has been supposed. This would have some bearing on the passage at hand.

¹"Eschatology," HDB, op. cit., I, 753.

²Der Brief des Jakobus (Stuttgart: Calwer, 1932), p.

nature. He mentions the parousia twice (5:7, 8), and he emphasizes its nearness (ἤγγικεν¹). He speaks of judgment (5:1-3) which will be administered by the Judge (5:9), and the judgment will be meted out on the basis of character (2:13) and responsibility (3:1). There is a kingdom promised (2:5), and there are rewards for the faithful (1:12).

The Jewish influences on the extended eschatological passage (5:1-11) of the Epistle are manifest. Such expressions as ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις,² ὡς πῦρ ἐθησαυρίσατε,³ εἰς τὸ ὤτα κυρίου σαβαώθ⁴ and ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σφαγῆς⁵ are unmistakably Jewish. Oesterley thinks that three of the four outstanding themes of the Jewish doctrine of the last things are to be found in Jas. 5:1-6.⁶ He considers the passage so Jewish as to necessitate

¹Cf. the witness of John the Baptist in Mk. 1:15: ἤγγικεν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ.

²Jas. 5:3. A reference to the times of the Messiah. Cf. Isa. 2:2; Micah 4:1; Hosea 3:5; Joel 3:1; Amos 8:11; 9:11; Zech. 8:23.

³Jas. 5:3. Cf. I Enoch 102:1: "And in those days when he brings a grievous fire upon you, whither will ye flee, and where will ye find deliverance?"

⁴"Lord of Sabaoth," "Lord of Hosts" (ה' צבאות). In the LXX it is usually translated by παντοκράτωρ but in all occurrences in Isaiah it is transliterated as here.

⁵The expression is used with reference to judgment. Cf. Jer. 12:3; I Enoch 94:9: "Ye have committed blasphemy and unrighteousness, and have become ready for the day of slaughter." Cf. also I Enoch 99:6.

⁶ἐν ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις (5:3) is a reference to the advent of the Messiah; 5:1-3 to the judgment of the wicked; and 5:6 an implicit reference to the blessedness of the righteous.

the postulation of a Jewish eschatological document inserted at this point into the Epistle. Verses 7-11, on the other hand, he regards as straight Christian eschatological teaching with the main emphasis on the parousia.¹

The dissection of the Epistle in this fashion is not warranted. The entire passage 5:1-11 has a distinct Jewish colouring. Spitta and Meyer² especially, have shown that even a parousia may be found in the pre-Christian Jewish writings. It must be remembered that Christian eschatology as well as other theological themes were developed primarily from Jewish thought. One is not required, however, to conclude with Spitta and Meyer that the passage under discussion does not rise above or go beyond Jewish eschatological ideas.³ James touches upon three distinct eschatological themes:

The only great Jewish eschatological theme which is lacking in 5:1-6 is the signs of the approach of the "Messianic Era." EGT, op. cit., IV, 466.

¹Ibid., p. 467.

²Spitta's citation from Test. Jud. 22:2 is not found in the Armenian version and his two quotations from the Test. Abr. are of Christian origin. However, Meyer cites Mal. 3:1; I Enoch 1:3 f.; "The Holy Great One will come forth from his dwelling, and the eternal God will tread upon the earth, (even) on Mount Sinai, [and appear from His camp] and appear in the strength of His might from the heaven of heavens." Cf. Ass. Mos. 10:12; IV Ezra 6:18 f. These passages show that there was a Jewish belief in a παρουσία τοῦ κυρίου σαβαώθ. Of course the passage in James refers to the Christian belief in the parousia of Christ.

³Cf. Hauck, op. cit., p. 18 where he shows that James' teaching concerning judgment rises above the Jewish teaching on this subject. Despite his scathing denunciations of the

1. The Kingdom of God

The mention of the Kingdom of God grows out of the discussion of προσηπολημψία in the initial section of chapter three. No partiality is to be shown to the rich, for "has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to those who love him?" This is James' only mention of the kingdom in the entire Epistle, and thus it is difficult to know precisely what he means by "kingdom" here. However, in the light of our Lord's teaching in Lk. 6:20: "Blessed are you poor for yours is the kingdom of God," it seems likely that James has in mind the teaching of Jesus. The kingdom is the reign of God partially realized in this life, but only fully realized in the future (cf. ἐπηγγείλατο). It is practically synonymous with salvation or eternal life.¹ This interpretation is further substantiated by the use of κληρονόμος in connection with βασιλεία. Westcott, in his note on Heb. 6:12, has shown that κληρονόμος in the New Testament is

commonly used in connection with the blessing which belongs to divine sonship, the spiritual correlative to the promise to Abraham. The son of God, as son, enjoys that which answers to his new birth. This is

wicked rich there is no thought of the righteous violently repaying them, a thought which occurs throughout I Enoch. Cf. 91:12; 95:3; 96:1, 99:1; 99:12, etc. The author of the Epistle leaves the judgment of the wicked in the hands of God.

¹Cf. Ropes, op. cit., p. 194.

described as "eternal life," or "the kingdom of God," or "salvation," an "inheritance incorruptible," "the eternal inheritance."¹

2. Judgment

This is the dominant eschatological theme of the Epistle. In 2:12 Christians are admonished to "so speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty," and they are reminded in the following verse that "judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy." Judgment, in other words, will be administered on the basis of character. In 3:1 the author adds another basis for judgment: "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness." Responsibility will also constitute a basis for judgment.

The judgment of the non-Christian rich is also emphasized in the Epistle. Jas. 1:10 f. depicts the swift judgment of God on the rich, which James identifies as the wicked. His destruction is likened to the swift withering of the grass from the burning heat of the sun. In the midst of his pursuits the rich man will fade away. The theme of judgment reappears in 5:1-3, and here the author reaches prophetic heights:

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence

¹The Epistle to the Hebrews (London: The Macmillan Co., 1909), pp. 167 ff., quoted by Mayor, op. cit., p. 86.

against you and will eat your flesh like fire.
You have laid up treasure for the last days.¹

It is inconceivable that the condemnations of the first verses of chapter five could have been addressed to Christians. These rich have defrauded the poor labourers, they have indulged themselves and thus have fattened their hearts for a day of slaughter. They have even condemned and killed the righteous man. Evidence that this terrible passage is addressed to the non-Christian rich is forthcoming from the method of address of the following section. The author turns from his powerful denunciation of the non-Christian rich to his fellow Christians and addresses them in the words: "Be patient, therefore, Brethren, until the coming of the Lord."²

In this, the final passage on the subject of judgment in the Epistle, James turns to his Christian readers who are becoming a bit frustrated and impatient with the difficult social situation in which they find themselves. His word of exhortation is: "Do not grumble, brethren, against one another, that you may not be judged: behold the judge is standing at the doors." Judgment is to be based on character, and the imminency of the judgment is paralleled by the imminency of the parousia, because the same Person is involved in both.³

¹Abundant parallels to this passage may be cited from I Enoch. Cf. Oesterley, EGT, op. cit., IV, 466.

²Jas. 1:7.

³Cf. Acts 17:31: "Because he has fixed a day on which

3. The Parousia

Although the dominant eschatological theme in the Epistle is judgment, the parousia is certainly the most significant and important. James presents the hope of the parousia as the great stimulus for the kind of Christian living which he advocates in his Epistle. Every kind of suffering and trial can be endured because the parousia is at hand. Plummer misses the point when he says that "James makes the unconscious impatience of primitive Christianity the hope of the parousia a basis for his exhortation to conscious patience." It is not a delayed parousia which is causing the impatience, it is unchanged adverse social conditions. There is absolutely no indication in the Epistle that the readers were living in a day when a delayed parousia was causing doubts and fears.² The expectation of the coming of Christ found in James is one of the strongest in the entire New Testament. Kittel points out that the eschatological pronouncements of chapter five lack three significant characteristics: "sie haben weder irgend etwas Apologetisches noch etwas Literarisches noch etwas Spek-

he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead."

¹Op. cit., p. 290.

²There are no questions in the minds of James' readers like the one we find in II Peter 3:4: "Where is the promise of his coming." His readers are living in confident and assured hope of the parousia.

ulatives an sich."¹ This fact, along with the lack of a tendency to enlarge upon judgment and the state of blessedness, differentiates our Epistle from later Christian apocalyptical writings. The expectancy of the parousia is living and immediate, and although Kittel perhaps goes beyond the evidence found in this passage in identifying the eschatological teaching with that which was prevalent in the church between A. D. 40 and 60,² it is far easier to associate this concept of the parousia with the early apostolic church than with second century post-apostolic Christianity. Kittel's arguments are far more impressive than those which K. Aland uses in attempting to refute him. Aland's citations of eschatological parallels from second century writers, Hermas in particular, are not convincing.³

¹"Die geschichtliche Ort des Jacobusbriefes," op. cit., p. 83.

²Ibid., p. 84.

³Paul Feine, Theologie des Neuen Testaments (8 aufl. hrsg. von K. Aland; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1951), p. 394.

CHAPTER VI

THE READERS AND THEIR SOCIAL SITUATION

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A. Readers

The only direct hint in the Epistle which might help in discovering who the readers are is found in the superscription: *Ἰάκωβος θεοῦ καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοῦλος ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ χαίρειν* . At first appearance this seems simple enough: James is addressing Jews living outside of Palestine. However, the nature and content of the Epistle, and other factors, make the exact meaning of the superscription more difficult to discover than might be revealed on the surface. The complexity of the problem is shown by the fact that the superscription has been taken to mean: (1) non-Christian Jews only; (2) Christian Jews only; (3) both; (4) Jewish and Gentile Christians separatively; (5) Jewish and Gentile Christians regarded as one body; (6) Jewish Christians primarily, including Gentiles and non-Christian Jews; (7) Gentile Christians primarily.

The majority of commentators take the phrase to mean the Jews living outside of Palestine, and then, on the basis of the contents of the Epistle, limit the superscription to Christian Jews, at least primarily. The fatal objection to

this position is that ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς is a term which traditionally meant the entirety of the Jewish nation¹ which, of course, no matter how widely it may have been scattered in the Diaspora, could not be considered to have had its entire existence outside of Palestine. Another objection which is largely overlooked by the proponents of this view is the grammatical one. If James were writing to that part of the Jewish nation which had taken up its abode in the Diaspora, he could easily have made it clear by such a phrase as ταῖς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα φυλῶν ταῖς ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ, or τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν δώδεκα φυλῶν διασπαρείσιν.²

The only other possibility seems to be to take ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς in a symbolical sense. The phrase would then refer to the Christian Church, considered as the new Israel, and as inheriting the spiritual privileges of the people of God. The figurative interpretation of this phrase may seem out of line with the intensely practical tone of the Epistle, but the two objections to the first interpretation mentioned above demand another explanation, and the figurative one seems to be the only reasonable alternative.

There is evidence, of course, in the New Testament, that the Christian Church is considered the successor of the

¹Cf. Eccclus. 44:23; Ass. Mos. 2:4 f. Baruch 1:2; 62:5; 63:3; 64:3; 77:2; 78:4; 84:3; Acts 26:7.

²Cf. Ropes, op. cit., p. 124.

Old Testament ecclesia. Our Lord's words ("my church") in Matt. 16:18 seem to be contrasted with the "church of Israel," and Paul contrasts "the Israel of God"¹ with the "Israel according to the flesh."²

Now if we take ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς figuratively to mean the Christian Church, it necessitates a figurative meaning for ἐν τῇ διασπορᾷ also. This phrase we take to mean "dispersed in an alien and hostile world."³ There are many New Testament passages which teach the temporary nature of the Church in the world. The church sojourns in exile;⁴ her commonwealth and metropolis is in heaven;⁵ she has no abiding city here but seeks one which is to come.⁶ This idea also finds abundant expression in later Christian writings.⁷ Thus the superscription

¹Gal. 3:7-9, 29; 6:16.

²I Cor. 10:18. Cf. Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11.

³Zahn sees in this phrase the doctrine of a twofold Israel. The twelve tribes in the dispersion are the new Israel and are to be differentiated from the old. "Unlike the twelve tribes who have Palestine for their native land, Jerusalem for their capital, and the temple as a center of religious worship, the twelve tribes addressed in the letter have no earthly fatherland nor any capital upon earth, but always, no matter where they may be settled, live scattered in a strange world like the Jewish exiles in Mesopotamia or Egypt." Intro., op. cit., I, 76. This is ingenious but seems to be reading too much into the phrase.

⁴I Pet. 1:1; 1:17; 2:11.

⁵Phil. 3:20; Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22.

⁶Heb. 13:14.

⁷Ep. ad Diognetum 5; II Clem. Rom. 5:1, 5, 6.

taken as a whole would mean "to the Christian Church, the new Israel, which in reality has its home in heaven but which for the present is resident in a hostile and alien world."¹ This is as far as the superscription can take us in determining the readers of the Epistle. We must now look at the Epistle itself.

An examination of the contents reveals unmistakably that the Epistle was written primarily for Jews. Some of the most obvious evidences for this are: (1) the tendency on the part of the readers to blame God for their sin--a tendency which sprang from the Jewish doctrine of the evil yetser; (2) the use of $\tau\hat{\eta}\varsigma \delta\acute{o}\xi\eta\varsigma$ in 2:1, a reference to the Shekinah which would be unintelligible to non-Jewish readers; (3) the evident pride in a monotheistic faith;² (4) blasphemy against the honorable name³ which would be more likely among the Jews than

¹This does not exclude the possibility of the letter addressing itself to a specific situation. The Epistle itself, as already indicated, gives evidence of this. Although James addresses the church at large, he has a more-or-less specific segment in mind. If our theory of an early date is correct, the spread of the church at this time was still more-or-less limited. The best conjecture, especially in the light of 2:14-26 (see above pp. 58 f.), is that the letter was originally addressed to the churches in the neighborhood of Antioch but not necessarily restricted to them.

²Cadoux points out that James would hardly belittle even a mere monotheism in writing to anyone but Jews, "who were in no danger of losing this tenet. To men recently won from polytheism and surrounded by polytheistic friends and kinfolk, such a suggestion would be dangerous." Op. cit., p. 18.

³Jas. 2:7.

the Gentiles¹ (the Jews refusal to accept Christ as their Messiah might be considered blasphemy by Christians); (5) the use of the feminine "ye adultresses"² in a passage addressed to both men and women recalls the Old Testament figure of the Lord as the faithful husband and Israel as his unfaithful wife. This too would hardly be intelligible to Gentile readers.³ In addition to these specific references, the Epistle reveals that its readers are Jews by what it does not contain. There is nothing said about the "Gentile sins" of unchastity, idolatry and drunkenness, and there is no mention of the relation of slaves to their masters.⁴ These topics play an important role in the "Gentile" letters of Paul but would not arise in a letter to Jews. In the face of this evidence it is difficult to see how Barnett can make the confident assertion: "Nothing in the Epistle suggests readers of Jewish origin."⁵ Most scholars consider the Epistle of James the most Jewish writing in the New Testament.

¹Cf. Acts 13:45; 18:6; 26:11.

²Jas. 4:4.

³For a formidable list of indications of Jewish readers cf. A. T. Cadoux, op. cit., pp. 10-18.

⁴Cf. T. Zahn's essay, "Die soziale Frage und die innere Mission nach dem Brief des Jakobus" in Skizzen aus dem Leben der Alten Kirche (3 Aufl.; Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1908), p. 102.

⁵op. cit., p. 256.

Now if the superscription reveals that the letter is addressed to the Christian Church generally, and the contents show that these Christians were primarily Jews, may we not assume that the letter was written at a time when the church was constituted primarily of Jews,¹ i. e., before the Gentile mission which brought large numbers of non-Jews into the Church?

The above theory raises the question: How does one then account for the passages which are obviously addressed to non-Christians?² This question is adequately answered by assuming that non-Christian Jews were frequenting the Christian assemblies³ (cf. 2:1-7) even as we know from the Acts that non-Jews (the εὐσεβεῖς and σεβόμενοι) were often in attendance at the Jewish synagogues. James 4:13-17 and especially 5:1-6 represent a prophetic attempt to reach these unbelieving Jews. Furthermore, the denunciation of their practices and the pro-

¹preaching activity among the Gentiles had, of course, already begun (cf. Acts 8:4 ff., 26 ff.; 10; 11:20). The discussion between Paul and the "pillars" in Gal. 2:1-10 primarily grew out of Paul's year-long preaching mission at Antioch which resulted in the Gentiles of that city being further reached (cf. Acts 11:20) with the Gospel. Despite this preaching among the Gentiles the Church was still by and large Jewish. Cf. Zahn, Introduction, I, 101.

²E. g., 5:1-6.

³Cf. I Cor. 14:23 f.: "If, therefore, the whole church assembles and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad? But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all."

nouncement of God's ultimate judgment upon them would probably serve to encourage the oppressed Christians. Also, it should be added that Gentiles are not wholly outside of James' purpose in writing his Epistle. The introduction of the example of Rahab in 2:25 is probably for their benefit. It must be emphasized, however, that despite these "non-Christian Jewish" and "Gentile" passages, the letter is addressed primarily to Jewish Christians.

B. Social Situation

In the shorter disconnected passages of the Epistle it is impossible to know to what degree the actual circumstances of James' readers are revealed. Most of the exhortations contained in these passages are general and relate to social and spiritual conditions which one might find among almost any group of Christians in any age. Trials and temptations, pride, jealousy, evil speaking, selfish ambitions, double-mindedness, friendship with the world, lack of faith in prayer, etc., are conditions which are much too general to be of value in attempting to discover historical connections. The material in these passages is traditional exhortative and catechetical material used in synagogue sermons by James and included in his letter because he knew it would be applicable to any situation. This does not, however, apply to the more extended passages in the Epistle which treat of social conditions. In these the author's firsthand knowledge of the situation is more evident, and al-

though the material of these passages was also originally sermonic and addressed to Jews of Jerusalem, it is certainly more original to the author. Some reworking would be necessary to make the material more specifically applicable to the churches addressed, but since social conditions in Jerusalem and the rest of Palestine and Syria were similar, major revision would probably not be necessary.

The most important extensive passages revealing the social situation of the readers are those which deal with the problem of the relation of the poor to the rich. James seems to be addressing, for the most part, poor Christians who are employed as farm labourers for wealthy land owners. A few rich may be included among his Christian readers,¹ but James' sympathies are obviously with the poor. His statements denouncing the rich (especially 5:1-6) are among the strongest in the New Testament. They find their equal only in the so-called Ebionite passages of St. Luke's Gospel. James' championing of the poor is strongly reminiscent of certain Old Testament passages. In the poetical and prophetic books parti-

¹Especially if one takes 4:13-17 as referring to Christians. James 4:17: "Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and we shall do this or that,'" seems to indicate that believers are addressed. However, the paragraph begins with ἄγε ὑμεῖς, a method of address contrasted with ἀσεβέες, (cf. 5:7), and apparently used to address non-Christians (cf. 5:1 which is obviously addressed to unbelievers). These traders probably constituted a wealthy non-Christian class like the large land owners.

cularly, the poor are depicted as the objects of the special regard of Jehovah¹ and are substantially identified with "the godly," "the righteous," or "the faithful."² The enemy of the poor is the enemy of God and "rich" is synonymous with "wicked."³ During the inter-testament period this bitter class conflict is clearly evident in Pss. Sol. 1:4 ff. and I Enoch 94 ff. In these passages the Pharisees are identified with the "pious poor" and the Maccabees and Sadducees with the "wicked rich."⁴ In New Testament times the sympathy of our Lord is obviously with the poor,⁵ but "the poor" are no longer the Pharisees. The heirs of the traditional Armenpathos are those pious folk who long for the Kingdom of God.⁶ That James, like Jesus, possesses this strong sympathy for the poor is evident from his Epistle.

In 1:9-11 the author addresses both poor and rich.

¹Especially when the Hebrew עני is used.

²Cf. S. R. Driver, "Poor," HDB, IV, 19 where many Old Testament passages are cited.

³Cf. Psa. 109:31.

⁴Due to their zeal for the law the Maccabees were originally associated with the Pharisees, but since the Pharisees were not interested in political supremacy or freedom the Maccabees were brought more and more into close relationship with the politically ambitious Sadducees. Cf. Schürer, op. cit., I, I, 287.

⁵Cf. Lk. 6:20 and Jas. 2:5.

⁶Dibelius associates Matt. 11:5 and Lk. 7:22 with Isa. 61:1 ff. Op. cit., p. 39.

The poor man is to exult in his inward elevation, because no matter how difficult his situation may be, he is rich in faith and an heir of the kingdom which God has promised (cf. 2:5). The rich man too is to exult but for a different reason. He is to pride himself on being lowered. This is not a reference to loss of wealth (although that may be involved). The experience of the rich man mentioned here is as inward as that of the poor man. Moffatt suggests that James is addressing a rich man who has become a Christian¹ and who, perhaps after attending some meeting of the church, finds himself wishing to be like those more rich in hope than he.

The paradox for him is that he is to pride himself on being lowered, i. e. in what from the worldly point of view seems the humiliating position of membership in a poverty stricken brotherhood where wealth is of no account in the sight of God, and where he has to associate with people the majority of whom are socially inferior.²

He is no longer to pride himself either in his position or his wealth, and that is so much the better for him, for James gives a graphic description of the fate of the rich (the generic singular, which here refers to the unconverted rich--those who place great emphasis on the possession of material things). As the grass withers before the scorching heat of the sun,³ so the rich

¹Although commentators are divided it seems natural to supply ἀδελφός with πλούσιος in v. 10. There certainly were a few rich numbered among the early Christians.

²The Epistle of St. James, op. cit., p. 11.

³See below, p. 230 where this simile is discussed in detail.

man will pass and fade away¹ in the midst of his pursuits.² Hort sees in this verse a reference to the premature death of the rich man. The rich man perishes while he is still on the move and before he attains the state of restful enjoyment.³ The passage, however, is eschatological,⁴ and thus the reference is not to death but to the swift judgment of the wicked rich.

The strong sympathy our author has for the poor is also evident in 2:1-13. Social favoritism towards the rich is decried as incompatible with belief in Jesus Christ. An explicit example is cited.⁵ Into the Christian gathering (συναγωγή⁶) comes a rich man. He is obviously rich by the

¹ παραλεύσεται and μαρυνθήσεται refer to judgment, not to the transitoriness of riches or to death. The passage is eschatological and is supplemented by the stronger passage 5:1-6.

² ἐν ταῖς πορείαις αὐτοῦ . πορεία literally means "journey" and here refers to the activities of the rich, but James may have in mind more particularly the wealthy travelling traders of 4:13-16.

³ Op. cit., p. 18.

⁴ See above, pp. 200, 201.

⁵ The illustration seems to reflect an actual incident. It may, however, have been used by James "by way of illustration" without any explicit incident in mind.

⁶ συναγωγή here refers to the Christian gathering, not the place of meeting. Cf. Hermas Mand. XI, 9: ὅταν οὖν ἔλθῃ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἔχων τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ θεῖον εἰς συναγωγὴν ἀνδρῶν δικαίων. For complete discussions of the use of the word by James cf. Zahn, Introduction, op. cit., I, 94 f., Dibelius, op. cit., pp. 123-125 and Hauck, op. cit., pp. 94 f.

clothes he wears and the gold ring on his finger and is a stranger and thus probably a non-Christian. The Christians (most of whom are poor) show him special consideration, whereas the poor stranger in tattered clothes is gruffly told to remain standing or is given an inferior seat. This action of truckling to the wealthy is contrary to God's estimate of the poor ("Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom . . ."); furthermore, it is to no avail ("Is it not the rich who oppress you, is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme that honorable name by which you are called?"); finally, it is contrary to the law of love ("But if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.").

The strongest anti-rich statement in the Epistle is found in 5:1-6. In its tone it is strikingly similar to the pronouncements of the Old Testament prophets and also has parallels in the Wisdom literature¹ and I Enoch.² The passage stands closest, however, to the teachings of Jesus, Lk. 6:24 in particular: "But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation," and the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Lk. 16:19-31.

James finds the rich guilty of four sins: (1) They

¹Cf. Wis. 2:10 ff.

²Cf. I Enoch 94:7-11; 96:4-8; 97:3-10; 98:4-16; 99:11-16; 100:6-13; 103:5-8.

are hoarding their wealth (5:2), which is conceived of in the typical oriental fashion of consisting of raiment and coin. But this wealth is already deteriorating; their clothes are moth-eaten and their money is rusted over. James' attitude towards hoarding is similar to that of Sirach: "Lose money for the sake of a brother or a friend, and let it not rust under a stone or a wall."¹ (2) The rich are defrauding the poor farm labourers (5:4). This action was explicitly contrary to the Mosaic Law. "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates. At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it: lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee."² (3) The rich are living in wanton luxury (5:5), but this extravagant living is simply fattening them up for the day of slaughter. The phrase "day of slaughter"³ is taken from Jeremiah. In the inter-Testament period it took on an eschatological significance which it has here. Finally, James charges the rich with condemning and murdering the just (5:6). Some have taken this to be a reference to the death of Christ. The context shows, however, that the "just" (generic

¹Ecclus. 29:10.

²Deut. 24:14 f.

³See above, p. 197.

singular) represents the poor who have been treated without mercy by the rich. Moffatt points out that "murdered" had a wider range in Jewish ethics familiar to James.¹ Here the reference is probably to "judicial murders" since the statement follows the word "condemned." The poor are haled into court (cf. 2:6) and can do nothing about it. They are completely at the mercy of the unscrupulous rich. Yet despite all of this mistreatment the poor do not resist (5:6b).

The point last mentioned is of special importance in arriving at St. James' view of the social order and his relation to it. We have seen that he has an active social consciousness and powerful convictions along these lines, yet he stirs up no class feeling. There is no thought of redress as we find in I Enoch 95:3: "Fear not the sinners, ye righteous; for again will the Lord deliver them into your hands, that ye may execute judgment upon them according to your desires." This same hope for redress is expressed in 96:1: "Be hopeful, ye righteous; for suddenly shall the sinners perish before you, and ye shall have lordship over them according to your desires," and 98:12: "Woe to you who love the deeds of unrighteousness: wherefore do ye hope for good hap unto yourselves? know that ye shall be delivered into the hands of the righteous, and they

¹The Epistle of St. James, op. cit., p. 70. Cf. Ecclus. 34:20 (24) f. "(As) one that killeth the son before the father's eyes is he that offereth a sacrifice from the goods of the poor. A scanty bread is the life of the poor: He that depriveth him is a man of blood."

shall cut off your necks and slay you, and have no mercy upon you." James also gives no thought to social reform. There is no suggestion of the forceful overthrow of the rich. The change will not come by the efforts of men but by the eschatological intervention of God. His instruction to the poor is to be patient with their present social situation because the parousia is at hand. In all of this James stands closer to the teaching of Jesus than to Judaism. Jesus' sympathies are with the poor.¹ He emphasizes the pitfalls and dangers of wealth.² Most important of all Jesus too speaks of an imminent change in the social order,³ and like James he teaches that this change will not be the result of the efforts of men but will be ushered in by God. Therefore, Jesus has no plan for social reform. Dibelius reminds us: "Die Gottesreichs-Pre-digt ist nicht revolutionär, weil sie apokalyptisch ist."⁴

¹Lk. 6:20; Matt. 11:5.

²Lk. 12:16 ff.; 16:19 ff.; Mk. 10:25.

³Lk. 6:20 ff.

⁴Op. cit., p. 41.

CHAPTER VII

DATE AND PLACE

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A. Date

A wide range of opinion prevails on the date of the Epistle of James. The various dates suggested fall into three groups: (1) pre-Christian;¹ (2) during the lifetime of the Lord's brother (early 40's to A. D. 62²); (3) late date (from cir. A. D. 70-150³). For some New Testament scholars the dating of the Epistle is so difficult that not even a guess is ventured. Thus Lake and Lake: "It is quite impossible to fix any date for the letter. It is of such a nature that, so far as the contents go, it might . . . have been written any time

¹Spitta, Massebieau and A. Meyer.

²Those who date the Epistle within the lifetime of James, the Lord's brother, are divided into two groups: (1) those who date the Epistle during the fourth decade, e. g., Alford, Beschlag, B. Weiss, Mayor, Patrick, Belser (Catholic), Zahn, Meinertz (Catholic), Plumptre, G. Kittel, Robertson, Hauck, etc.; (2) those who date it just before the death of James, i. e., cir. A. D. 62, e. g., Kern, Schmidt, Farrar, Parry, Rendall, Hort, etc.

³Moffatt (70-90), Ropes (75-125), Von Soden (81-96), McNeille (67-130), Dibelius (80-130), Windisch (in post-apostolic times), Jülicher (cir. 150), Grafe (120-140), Schamberg and Schoeps (beginning of second century).

from the second century B. C. to the eighteenth century A. D."¹

In the body of the dissertation intimations have been made relative to the dating of the Epistle. It is the purpose of this section to summarize these and to present additional material which bears on this problem. It should be said at the outset that the very nature of the Epistle--its lack of mention of historical events or personages, prevent us from making dogmatic assertions. Certainty is not attainable, but probability may be realized by means of cumulative evidence.

The social condition revealed in the Epistle suggests a date before the destruction of Jerusalem. The Asmonean nobility was superseded by a new aristocracy which oppressed the poor as did its predecessors. However, the new aristocracy disappeared during the war of A. D. 66-70. Many of the wealthy were killed and others were sold into slavery. Moore points out that subsequent to the Jewish War and the wars under Trajan and Hadrian the old social cleavage between rich and poor is heard of much less. Poor and rich are no longer synonymous with pious and wicked.² The new social cleavage is between those who are instructed in their religion and those who are not, namely, the Hakamim and the Amme ha-arets.³

¹An Introduction of the New Testament (London: Christopher, 1938), p. 164. ^{to}

²Op. cit., II, 157.

³While this social cleavage is generally recognized

In the Epistle of James this social cleavage nowhere appears, whereas the pre-Jewish War social division between the pious poor and the wicked rich is evident everywhere.¹

The concept of faith in the Epistle suggests an early date. Faith which is associated with prayer and healing,² faith in the miraculous intervention of God, strongly resembles the concept in the Synoptic Gospels. Indeed, the general similarity of tone and teaching which the Epistle displays with the Synoptic tradition is strong evidence for an early date.³

The eschatology of the Epistle points to an early date.⁴ The parousia expectation rates in intensity with that found in the Thessalonian Epistles. There is no indication of a delayed parousia as we find in some of the late books of the New Testament, and there are no apocalyptic visions or similar developments found in later apocalyptic literature.

in the first century, in the second century its consequences were more fully developed. Cf. Moore, ibid., 157 f.

¹Kittel suggests that if the Epistle was written in the second century the Martyrerproblem and persecution on account of one's faith would appear. The persecution mentioned in the Epistle is social, not religious.

²Cf. Powell: "If James is a late work, it provides us with an example of faith connected with bodily healing (5:15) which is quite without parallel in the Pastorals and any other late book of the New Testament." Op. cit., p. 314.

³See above, pp. 48-52 and cf. W. Michaelis, Einleitung in das Neue Testament (Bern: BEG-Verlag, 1946), pp. 281 f.

⁴See above, pp. 202 f.

James' readers are living in the active and powerful expectation of an imminent parousia. There is nothing in the Christian literature of the second century which can match the simple and powerful eschatological teaching of the Epistle of James.

The organization of the churches of the Epistle also points to an early date. The elders of the Church¹ alone seem to be regarded as possessing pastoral authority. The office of bishop is not mentioned as it most certainly would have been in the second century.² The only other officers of the church referred to are the teachers who seem to be loosely organized.

The debate concerning the Gentiles is wholly absent. This, of course, can be explained by assuming a late date, i. e., at a time when the argument had cooled down and had been largely forgotten.³ But it also can be explained by as-

¹They are called elders of the church to distinguish them from the Jewish elders of the community. Christian church organization was patterned after the synagogue organization. Cf. B. H. Streeter, The Primitive Church (London: Macmillan and Co., 1929), p. 73.

²How striking is the comparison with the pastorals!

³The absence of any mention of this controversy is conclusive evidence against a date cir. A. D. 60. It is assumed by those who accept this date for the Epistle that the argument had subsided by this time. But the words spoken by the elders to Paul in Acts 21:20-22 show that the controversy was raging as strong as ever in cir. A. D. 58. It must have taken a number of years for the argument to subside, and that would bring us to a date subsequent to the martyrdom of James in A. D. 62.

suming an early date, before the contention had become bitter. If James wrote cir. A. D. 44, the problem would have already arisen¹ but would not have assumed enough importance to have been mentioned in the letter. It was the Gentile mission which brought the problem into clear focus.

The superscription, as we have seen,² is addressed to the entire Church (ταῖς δώδεκα φυλαῖς ³), but the contents reveal that the hearers are primarily Jews. The only time in the history of the Christian Church one could address the entire Church and be speaking primarily to Jews was before the Gentile mission (cir. A. D. 47).

Finally, the crucial passage for dating the Epistle is the famous one on faith and works (2:14-26). These verses are inexplicable without presupposing a knowledge of certain Pauline formulas; yet it is hard to believe that the author of 2:14-26 is refuting Paul. This would involve an almost inconceivable miscomprehension of the Pauline doctrine of jus-

¹Cf. the discussion in Gal. 2:1-20 which arose primarily out of Paul's preaching to Gentiles in Antioch (Acts 11:26).

²See above, p. 206.

³δώδεκα φυλαί is also used in Hermas, Sim. IX, 17 to indicate the entirety of the Church, but the Church is a different kind of church from that in James. In Hermas the δώδεκα φυλαί inhabit the whole world. The Son of God has been preached to the Twelve Tribes by the Apostles. They have different characteristics because of their widespread habitations. In Hermas the Church has obviously taken on a much larger sphere of activity than in James.

tification by faith. The passage is best explained as having been occasioned by a misunderstanding of Paul, not by the author, but by his readers. Such a misunderstanding of Paul would be most likely at the very outset of his public preaching ministry. According to the Book of Acts Paul's first extended public preaching occurred at Antioch (Acts 11:26). This year-long ministry took place before the famine visit to Jerusalem of cir. A. D. 46 (cf. Acts 11:27-29; Gal. 2:1-10) and the Herodian persecution of A. D. 44.¹ How long it was before the misunderstanding and misapplication of Paul's doctrine of justification by faith came to the attention of James, we do not know. In view of the fact that Jews, both Christian and non-Christian from all over the Mediterranean world, were constantly moving in and out of Jerusalem, it probably was not long. A date cir. A. D. 44, during or immediately following the Herodian persecution,² would best fit all the known factors.

Now there is to my mind only one serious objection to an early dating of the Epistle. This is the fact that the

¹Cf. Josephus Antiq. xix. 8. 2. W. L. Knox places the Herodian persecution at A. D. 41 but is not followed in this by most New Testament scholars. St. Paul and the Church of Jerusalem, op. cit., p. xiii. Cf. F. Jackson and K. Lake, Beginnings, op. cit., I, 24 f.

²James probably did not assume the leadership of the Church of Jerusalem until the Herodian persecution which resulted in the death of James, son of Zebedee, and the brief imprisonment of Peter. Plumptre suggests that it may have been in the face of the new responsibilities which were placed upon him that he wrote the Epistle which bears his name. Op. cit., p. 41.

churches addressed show signs of apathy which seem to indicate they are past the early stages of their life. H. A. A. Kennedy regards our Epistle, along with I and II Timothy, Titus, Jude and II Peter, as "monuments of the Theology of the Developing Church."¹ The hot fervor^{or} of early Christianity has cooled off considerably; the churches are in a settled condition and there is general apathy. A similar prosaic religious atmosphere is to be found in such documents as the First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, the Epistle of Barnabas, the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles and the Shepherd of Hermas. All of these works were probably written between A. D. 95-150, and although the Epistle of James may not give evidence of such an advanced stage of this "curious dryness" as do these, yet it belongs to approximately the same period.

It is to be admitted that even a cursory reading of the Epistle will give evidence of this apathy. No missionary zeal is revealed in the Epistle. The readers are exhorted to be "doers of the word and not hearers only." Their concept of faith has crystallized. Faith is no longer commitment of the whole self to Christ but assent to orthodox Christian doctrine which had, in some cases, led to empty profession. It is undeniably true that we are moving in a different atmosphere from that found in the Epistles of Paul.

But is this a valid argument against an early date?

¹The Theology of the Epistles, op. cit., p. 222.

Time is not the only factor involved in apathy; the people themselves, their background and circumstances also are important factors. In periods of general intense enthusiasm and zeal there are always some who, because of these factors, are not carried along on the wave of excitement. Present day missionary letters from the same area bear witness to this fact. In one village the church may be thriving and in a neighboring town the Christian community be utterly languid. We are not surprised at this, for conditions like these existing contemporaneously have always been present in the Church. And even if time for a state of apathy to set in is insisted upon, about ten years are available for this to have taken place. The difficulty is a real one but is not fatal to the theory of an early date developed above.

B. Place

Although a number of opposing suggestions have been made from time to time,¹ there can be little doubt that the Epistle was written in Palestine. The local colouring of the Epistle indicates clearly where the author lived. He draws pictures which are near Eastern generally and Palestinian particularly.²

¹E. g., Antioch, Alexandria, Caesarea and Rome.

²Cf. the recent article by D. Y. Hadidian, "Palestinian Pictures in the Epistle of James," Expository Times, LXIII (1952), 227 f.

The early (πρόϊμον) and late (ὄψιμον) rains were "an habitual subject of conversation in Palestine."¹ In the Near East all the rainfall comes in the winter. Three periods of rain are distinguished:² (1) the early rain--early November until about December 15; (2) the winter rain--from December 15 to about March 15; (3) the latter rain--from March 15 to the last of April or early May. The early and late rains were the crucial ones, the former being necessary for the germination of the seed and the latter for the maturing of the grain.³ The way in which the author uses the illustration points more particularly to the climatic situation of Palestine and southern Syria. The farmer shows anxiety about these rains because they are by no means certain. In other subtropical lands of the Mediterranean the rain is more certain or as in parts of North Africa is not expected at all. In Palestine and Syria there is always anxiety. The great variation of annual rainfall of Palestine⁴ shows how this illustration particularly

¹Ropes, op. cit., p. 295.

²Cf. D. Y. Hadidian, op. cit., p. 228.

³Cf. Deut. 11:14; Jer. 3:3; 5:24; Hos. 6:3; Joel 2:23; Zech. 10:1 and Prov. 16:15. G. A. Smith says of the "latter rains": "Coming as they do before the harvest and the long summer drought, they are of far more importance to the country than all the rains of the winter months, and that is why they are passed over in Scripture, and emphasis is laid alone on the early and latter rains." The Historical Geography of the Holy Land, op. cit., p. 64.

⁴Cf. the rainfall chart for Jerusalem given by E. Hull, "Rain," HDB, IV, 196. There is no evidence that the climate of Palestine has changed since New Testament times.

fits the climatic situation which prevailed there and is evidence for the Palestinian provenance of the Epistle.¹

James 5:1-6 also reveals the local situation in Palestine. Cadoux remarks: "Where, except in Palestine, would a moralist, thinking of the abuse of great wealth in farming, think only of hired labour and not of slavery."²

James 1:6: ἔοικε κλύδωνι θαλάσσης ἀνεμιζομένῳ καὶ ῥιπιζομένῳ is probably derived from the author's intimate knowledge of the Sea of Galilee.³

The mention of sweet and bitter springs in 3:11 also suggests Palestine and in particular the Dead Sea. Mayor says:

The Dead Sea . . . to which St. James is probably alluding, was really bitter and had both salt and fresh springs on its shores. Other examples of bitter waters are Marah (Exod. 15:23), "the water that causeth the curse" (Numb. 5:18-27), Apoc. 8:11.⁴

The statement in 1:11: ἀνέτελεν γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος σὺν

¹An examination of the textual variants further substantiates this. ὑετόν is inserted by the "Syrian" text because of similar climatic conditions in that area. In Egypt (ⲭ ⲑ ⲙⲁⲕ ⲙⲁⲕ), Italy and the Western Med. (ff Cas) where these conditions were not known, καρπὸν is inserted or else there is the shorter reading with no noun at all. καρπὸν also would suit a Palestinian provenance. Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 759.

²Op. cit., p. 30.

³Hort seems to think that the reference suits the Mediterranean: "In the tideless Mediterranean even a slight ruffling would be noticed in contrast with the usually level calm, and the direct influences of disturbing winds are seen free from the cross effects of other agencies." Op. cit., p. 11.

⁴Op. cit., p. 124.

τῷ καύσωνι καὶ ἐξήρανε τὸν χότρον is usually taken to be a reference to the Sirocco, the famous desert wind which blows across Palestine from the east. If καύσων can be identified with the Sirocco the passage would be another indication of the Palestinian provenance of the Epistle. In the LXX καύσων is often used to translate the Hebrew ד'יז, the Sirocco, but when so used is always in connection with πνεῦμα or ἄνεμος.¹ When used alone καύσων simply means "burning heat."² In the James passage the reference is not to the Sirocco but to the burning summer heat of the sun which causes the grass and flowers to wither quickly.³

Finally, the mention of the cultivation of the fig, olive and vine (3:12), although suiting all the lands of the Mediterranean, taken with the above references, adds to the conviction that the author was writing from Palestine.

¹Cf. Jonah 4:8; Ez. 17:10; 19:12; Hos. 13:15, etc.

²Cf. W. Bauer, Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur (3 Aufl.; Berlin: A. Topelmann, 1937), p. 707. καύσων is so used in Gen. 31:40; Eccclus. 18:16; Matt. 20:12; Lk. 12:55. In the last passage καύσων refers to the heat of the Sirocco, not the Sirocco itself, which is designated by νότος, "south wind."

³Cf. J. Schneider: "Die Sonne bringt die Hitze, aber nicht die sengenden Ostwind mit. So ist streng genommen nicht an den aus den arabischen Steppen nach Palästina hineinwehenden Glutwind zu denken, sondern an die Hitze des Sommers." TWZNT, III, 644. Cf. also Hauck, op. cit., p. 54.

CHAPTER VIII

AUTHORSHIP



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AUTHORSHIP

According to the superscription the Epistle was written by "James a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." It is assumed that the author is a well known person, since nothing more is said of him by way of description. But there were several prominent men in early Christian times who bore the name James. Who is this James referred to in the superscription? The traditional view is that he is one of the persons named James mentioned in the New Testament. There are eight of these:

(1) James, the Lord's brother, who is so described in Gal. 1:19. He was one of four brothers of Jesus, the other three being Joses, Simon and Judas (Matt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3).

(2) James, the head of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:28; I Cor. 15:7; Gal. 2:9, 12).

(3) James, the author of the Epistle of James (1:1).

(4) James, the brother of the author of the Epistle of Jude (Jude 1).

(5) James the apostle, son of Zebedee and Salome. He perished in the Herodian persecution of A. D. 44 (Matt. 4:21; 10:2; 17:5; Mk. 10:35; 13:3; Lk. 9:54; Acts 12:2).

(6) James the apostle, son of Alphaeus (Matt. 10:3; Mk. 3:18; Lk. 6:15; Acts 1:13).

(7) James the little (ὁ μικρός), the son of Mary the wife of Clopas. His brother was Joses (Jn. 19:25; Matt. 27:56; Mk. 15:40).

(8) James, [father] of Judas. Judas was one of the Twelve (Lk. 6:16; Acts 1:13). Mk. 3:18 and Matt. 3:10 have Thaddaeus or Lebbaeus instead of Judas.

This list, of course, may be substantially reduced by consolidating some of these. Traditionally numbers (1), (2), (3) and (4) have been regarded as the same individual. James the little (ὁ μικρός¹), is usually identified with James the apostle, son of Alphaeus. Numbers (5) and (6) are certainly different individuals since their names occur together in the lists of the Twelve. This leaves James, [father] of Judas, which we cannot identify with any other James in the New Testament.

Of the several persons named James listed above, only two, James, son of Zebedee,² and James, the Lord's brother, have been proposed as the author of the Epistle. The former is an unlikely candidate since there is no evidence that he

¹ ὁ μικρός means "the little," not "the less," and thus Jerome's contention that the epithet implied only one more James is false.

² See above, pp. 25 f. for mention of the views of Isidore of Seville and Dante. Both held that James, son of Zebedee, wrote the Epistle.

attained a position of leadership in the Church which would warrant a letter addressed to the Church generally.¹ It has never been generally held in any age of the Church that James, son of Zebedee, wrote the Epistle. The traditional view identifies the author of the Epistle with James, the Lord's brother. Precisely what is meant by the phrase, "the Lord's brother," has divided orthodox scholars from very early times. Three distinct theories have arisen relative to the meaning of the phrase "the Lord's brother."²

A. The Hieronymian Theory

St. Jerome was first³ to propound the theory that our Lord's brothers were in reality only cousins.⁴ This he did in a treatise written in answer to the Roman Helvidius⁵ who had used the example of Mary, whom he claimed bore children to

¹The other objection is his early death (A. D. 44). If the above stated theory of an early date is correct, this is not an insurmountable objection.

²For a complete discussion of these theories cf. Zahn, "Bruder and Vetter Jesu," Forschungen, op. cit., VI, 225-363, Mayor, op. cit., pp. v-lv, and Lightfoot, op. cit., pp. 252-291.

³J. Eadie, Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1869), pp. 75 f., thinks that Clement of Alexandria held the view St. Jerome later espoused. His evidence is indecisive.

⁴Jerome's theory was especially attractive since it maintained the perpetual virginity not only of Mary but of Joseph also.

⁵Helvidius was an obscure person known to us only through Jerome's refutation of his views.

Joseph subsequent to the birth of Jesus, to support his claims that the married was superior to the virgin life.¹ There are at least three fatal objections to the Hieronymian theory:

(1) The word ἀδελφός does not mean "cousin." Jerome appeals to the Old Testament where Lot is called an ἀδελφός of Abraham² and Jacob of Laban.³ Lightfoot remarks in this connection:

In an affectionate and earnest appeal intended to move the sympathies of the hearer, a speaker might not unnaturally address a relation or a friend or even a fellow-countryman as his 'brother.' And even when speaking of such to a third person he might through warmth of feeling and under certain aspects so designate him. But it is scarcely conceivable that the cousins of any one should be commonly and indeed exclusively styled his 'brothers' by indifferent persons; still less, that one cousin in particular should be singled out and described in this loose way, 'James the Lord's brother.'⁴

In the New Testament there are special terms to denote this relationship. ἀνέψιος or even συγγενής are both more appropriate than ἀδελφός.

(2) The ἀδελφοί are always mentioned with Mary, the mother of Jesus, not with Mary, the wife of Clopas.⁵ This is very strange if in reality the ἀδελφοί were only her nephews.

¹The treatise was called, Against Helvidius Concerning Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Mary. It was written cir. A. D. 383. His theory is also mentioned in his Commentary on Galatians, 1:19.

²Gen. 14:14.

³Gen. 29:15.

⁴Op. cit., p. 261.

⁵Cf. Mk. 6:3; Acts 1:14.

(3) The theory asserts that among the Twelve at least two, perhaps three, were ἀδελφοί of James. Although Jerome himself did not develop his theory to this extent, this nevertheless was later advocated. Lk. 6:15 f. reads: καὶ Μαθθαῖον καὶ Θωμᾶν, καὶ Ἰάκωβον Ἀλφαίου καὶ Σίμωνα τὸν καλούμενον ῥηλωτὴν, καὶ Ἰούδαν Ἰακώβου, καὶ Ἰούδαν Ἰσκαριώθ, ὃς ἐγένετο προδότης. The advocates of the Hieronymian theory translate Ἰούδαν Ἰακώβου "Jude, brother of James," and identify him with the Jude, the brother of the Lord, who wrote the Epistle of Jude. Simon the Zealot, since his name occurs with the other two, is identified with Simon, the brother of Jesus. Thus three of the brothers of Jesus, James, Jude and Simon, are included among the Twelve.

Now if, as this theory supposes, at least two, perhaps three, of the ἀδελφοί were among the Twelve, how is one to explain the plain statement of Jn. 7:5: οὐδὲ γὰρ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτόν? It is certainly strange to find three unbelievers among the twelve disciples of Jesus. Jerome saw the difficulty with respect to James and suggested that the statement in John is a general one and does not apply to James. He does not, however, account for Jesus' brothers Jude and Simon, who, according to this theory, were among the Twelve.

The Hieronymian theory is freighted with difficulties. It is neither consistent with Scripture nor has it the backing of tradition. Jerome's primary concern, it must be admitted,

was to support by his ingenious theory the dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary.

B. The Epiphanian Theory

The Epiphanian view¹ which regards James as the son of Joseph by a previous marriage, attempts to maintain the post-nuptial virginity of Mary on the one hand and the grammatical necessity of giving ἀδελφός its natural meaning on the other.

Whereas Jerome appealed to Scripture to bolster his theory, the Epiphanian finds its strength in tradition. Lightfoot maintains that the majority of Patristic and other earlier authorities held the Epiphanian view.² But again it must be admitted that this theory, although it preceded the Hieronymian, nonetheless arose from the same motive--that of conserving the ecclesiastical dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary. It seems somewhat strange to the modern mind that the Church should have insisted upon this doctrine. To our mind none of the glory is taken from Mary, "the highly favored of

¹The theory took its name from Epiphanius, its staunchest supporter, who lived in the fourth century. The theory itself goes back to the early part of the second century. The earliest extant statement of it is found in Protevangelium Jacobi IX, 2.

²He mentions the following: Gospel of Peter, Protevangelium, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Eusebius, Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrosiaster, Gregory of Nyssa, Epiphanius, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Eastern services, Later Greek writers. Op. cit., p. 291.

the Lord" and the "blessed among women" or from Jesus himself in supposing that God had favored His mother in giving birth to subsequent sons and daughters according to natural biological laws.

C. The Helvidian Theory

The view which finds the most support in Scripture and which also enjoys the backing of tradition is the Helvidian theory, so called after Helvidius, who in A. D. 380 published a treatise in which he maintained that the Lord's brethren were the offspring of Joseph and Mary. This theory takes the most natural interpretation of the scriptural passages which relate to the brethren of our Lord and is implied by the use of *πρωτότοκος* in Matt. 1:25 and Lk. 2:7.² Overlooking the theological dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary, there is only one major difficulty which attaches itself to the Helvidian theory. It arises out of the statement of Jesus by which, as He was hanging on the Cross, he commends his mother

¹Apart from the lack of Scriptural evidence an important difficulty attaches itself to the Epiphanian theory. It is generally conceded that our Lord was born cir. 6 B. C. According to the Epiphanian hypothesis James (assuming him to be the oldest of six or more children) would have been born at the latest cir. 12 B. C. Accepting the date of A. D. 62 for his martyrdom, James would have been well into his seventies, perhaps approaching eighty when he died. G. H. Rendall remarks: "There is nothing in the records to suggest so advanced an age; nor does it find support from the general impression conveyed by the Book of Acts in describing his relations with Paul and others." Op. cit., p. 272.

²Cf. Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 70 for a contrary opinion.

to the Beloved Disciple.¹

Lightfoot thinks this act of Jesus is fatal to the Helvidian theory. Is it possible with what we know of Jewish filial piety and close home ties that "our Lord would thus have snapped asunder the most sacred ties of natural affection"?² And even if it be argued that her sons were still unbelievers at the time, in a few days the resurrection was to change everything. James was to see³ and believe as were his brethren.

This is a serious difficulty and cannot be fully resolved since we do not have sufficient data to make definite judgments. We do not know exactly what was in the mind of Jesus when he said, "Woman, behold thy son!" However, we do know that the Beloved Disciple, although not a son of Mary according to the flesh, was not unknown to her. Lightfoot's statement that Mary was being "consigned to the care of a stranger of whose house she becomes henceforth the inmate"⁴ is an exaggeration. If we assume the identification of the Beloved Disciple with John, son of Zebedee, then there was a definite relationship between him and Mary. John was the son of Salome, the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus and thus her nephew and a cousin of our Lord. He had been on the most inti-

¹Jn. 19:26.

²Op. cit., p. 272.

³Cf. I Cor. 15:7.

⁴Op. cit., p. 272.

mate terms with Jesus and doubtless had often been in His home. It is not too much to suppose that during those visits John came to a deep and understanding love of the mother of the Lord. At the time of the crucifixion she was passing through a most difficult crisis. The subsequent conversion of her children would be of no help to her at that moment. She needed spiritual assistance and the comfort of an understanding and sympathetic heart during those hours of anguish and sorrow. Who better could have consoled her than he who was especially loved by Jesus? And whose house, under the circumstances, could have been a more appropriate place for her abode than that of her sister and nephew?¹ The difficulty, though real, is not as fatal as Lightfoot makes it out to be. The Helvidian remains the only Scriptural theory relative to the brethren of our Lord.

D. Evidences for the Traditional Authorship

In previous sections of the dissertation mention has already been made of indications which point to the traditional authorship. Additional material is suggested here, and although

¹C. J. Wright aptly comments on this incident in John: "Our identification of 'the beloved disciple' with John the Apostle, the son of Zebedee, harmonizes well with this incident, for there is a natural fitness in the words of Jesus which follow whereby He commends His own mother to the care of His own maternal cousin--and her nephew." Jesus the Revelation of God; His Mission and Message According to St. John (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1950), p. 356.

none of it is conclusive in itself, its cumulative weight points to the traditional view.

(1) The similarity of the language of the Epistle with that of James' speech and the circular letter of Acts 15. The most important of these similarities are:

a. The use of χαίρειν in the salutation (Jas. 1:1; Acts 15:23). χαίρειν is found elsewhere in the New Testament only in Acts 23:26.

b. The phrase τὸ καλὸν ὄνομα τὸ ἐπικληθὲν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς (Jas. 2:7) is closely paralleled by ἐφ' οὓς ἐπικέκληται τὸ ὄνομά μου ἐπ' αὐτούς (Acts 15:17).

c. The close relationship between ἀκούσατε ἀδελφοί μου (Jas. 2:5) and ἄνδρες ἀδελφοὶ ἀκούσατέ μου (Acts 15:13).

d. The use of pointed allusions to the Old Testament (Jas. 2:23, 25; 3:11, 17; Acts 15:14, 16-18, 21).

e. The pregnant use of the word ὄνομα (Jas. 2:7; 5:10, 14; Acts 15:14, 26).

f. Other verbal coincidences and similarities: ἀγαπητός (Jas. 1:16, 19; 2:5; Acts 15:25); τηρεῖν (Jas. 1:27) and διατηρεῖν (Acts 15:29); ἐπισκέπτεσθαι (Jas. 1:27; Acts 15:14); ἐπιστρέφειν (Jas. 5:19, 20; Acts 15:19).

These similarities should not be pressed too far since sufficient data are not available to make dogmatic conclusions, but as Oesterley says:

It is certainly striking that in the rather restricted scope which the short passage in Acts offers there

should, nevertheless, be so many points of similarity with portions of the Epistle. The fact almost compels us to recognize the same mind at work in each,
 . . .¹

(2) Knowledge of and dependence upon the Jewish tradition. Several instances of this dependence have already been noted.² One further example should be mentioned. This has to do with the author's use of the tradition concerning Elijah in 5:17, 18. The passage runs as follows:

Elijah was a man of like nature with ourselves and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit.

Now in the Old Testament passage, although prayer for the return of the rain might be inferred from the statement: "He cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,"³ there is no mention whatever of prayer for the cessation of rain. I Kings 17:1 is simply a prophetic statement: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." In later Jewish tradition, however, prayer is explicitly mentioned in connection with the cessation of the

¹EGT, *op. cit.*, IV, 392. Cf. also the similar conclusion of Mayor, *op. cit.*, p. iii.

²See above, Chapter V in particular.

³I Kings 18:42. IV Ezra makes it definite. In a passage about the prayers of the great men of the Old Testament who prayed the author writes: "and Elijah [prayed] for those who received the rain." IV Ezra 7:109.

rain. Sirach says: "By the word of God he [Elijah] shut up the heavens."¹ The rabbis inferred prayer from the words, "God, before whom I stand," after their regular fanciful method of interpretation.² James follows the Jewish tradition when he says: "And he Elijah prayed fervently that it might not rain."

This is also true relative to the duration of the drought. The Old Testament passage is not explicit. It simply states that the rain came in the third year.³ This would mean that the drought lasted less than three years. The rabbinic tradition of the drought's precise length is not uniform,⁴ but it is clear from the researches of Kittel⁵ that three and a half in the rabbinic tradition was used as a round number (one half of seven--very much like our half a dozen).⁶ Thus James here is again dependent upon the rabbinic

¹Ecclus. 48:3.

²As illustrative of this method with special reference to the passage before us, Ropes cites the Targums to Gen. 18:22 and 19:27 where "stood" is rendered "ministered in prayer." Op. cit., p. 311.

³I Kings 18:1.

⁴Cf. Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., III, 760 f. The majority opinion was three and a half.

⁵Die Probleme des palästinischen Spätjudentums, op. cit., p. 53 and "Der geschichtliche Ort des Jacobusbriefes," op. cit., p. 81.

⁶Since this tradition was unknown outside of Palestine, its occurrence in James is further evidence for the Palestinian

tradition¹ and is not, as some suggest, attempting to correct the Old Testament passage.

The dependence of the author of the Epistle on the Jewish tradition is consistent with the traditional authorship. We should expect that a man brought up in a pious Pharisaical home would be acquainted with this tradition and that his writings would reveal it. This acquaintance is decisive against the Hellenistic origin and authorship of the Epistle.

(3) The historical reports concerning the life and character of the Lord's brother are consistent with the contents of the Epistle. The New Testament reveals that the brothers of the Lord were not believers before the resurrection.² In the case of James we are told explicitly that the risen Lord appeared to him.³ This no doubt was the means of his conversion,⁴ and we subsequently find him and his brothers

provenance of the Epistle. Cf. Kittel, Die Probleme des pal-ästinischen Spätjudentums, op. cit., p. 53. Another possibility is that the three years and a half was fixed upon because from the days of Antiochus Epiphanes the Jews had considered that number the traditional duration of times of great calamity. Cf. A. Plummer, The Gospel According to S. Luke (4th ed.; International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901), p. 128.

¹Our Lord also follows the Jewish tradition concerning Elijah in Lk. 4:25. Apparently mention of the three years and a half was included in the traditional way in which the story was told in the first century A. D.

²Jn. 7:5.

³I Cor. 15:7.

⁴A fragment of the Gospel According to the Hebrews quoted by Jerome, De Viris Illus., 2, also records the appear-

numbered with the believers.¹ James immediately took his place in the Christian community at Jerusalem. Here he associated himself with Peter and John and others of the apostles. When and how he became head of the Jerusalem Church we are not told, but it must have been prior to the famine visit of cir. A. D. 43, for when Paul names the Three Pillars, James is mentioned first.² His relations with Paul, which have been discussed above,³ show that no basic antagonism existed between the two men.⁴ Indeed, on at least two occasions James defended Paul's mission among the Gentiles.⁵ After Paul's return to

ance of Jesus to James after the resurrection: "Also the Gospel called according to the Hebrews, lately translated by me into Greek and Latin speech, which Origen often uses, tells, after the resurrection of the Saviour: 'Now the Lord, when he had given the linen cloth unto the servant of the priest, went unto James and appeared to him (for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour wherein he had drunk the Lord's cup until he should see him risen again from among them that sleep),' and again after a little, 'Bring ye, saith the Lord, a table and bread,' and immediately it is added, 'He took bread and blessed and brake and gave it unto James the Just and said unto him: My brother, eat thy bread, for the son of Man is risen from among them that sleep.'"

¹Acts 1:14.

²The other possibility is that Paul names James first because at the time he wrote the Epistle to the Galatians James was head of the Jerusalem church. If this was the case, then W. L. Knox's explanation that the change took place during the Herodian persecution is feasible. St. Paul and the Church of Jerusalem, op. cit., p. 169.

³pp. 55 ff.

⁴Cf. G. Kittel, "Die Stellung des Jakobus zu Judentum und Heidenchristentum," Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, XXX (1931), 148 ff.

⁵See above, p. 54.

Jerusalem at the close of his third missionary journey, we hear nothing more of James in the New Testament.

Two accounts of the death of James, however, have come down to us in non-canonical literature. One of them is found in the Jewish historian Josephus, Antiq. XX, 9.1:

When, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition, he thought he had now a proper opportunity to exercise his authority. Festus was now dead and Albinus was upon the road; so he assembled the Sanhedrin of the judges, and brought them before the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ, whose name was James, and some others, or some of his companions; and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned.

Despite the fact that the text of Josephus is known to have suffered from Christian interpolation¹ there are no good grounds for rejecting the passage before us.² It is short, clear, has none of the obvious legendary elements of the Hegesippus account and says nothing about a fanatic reverence for the Law on the part of James. The Josephus account fixes the death of James at A. D. 62.

¹In particular Antiq. XVIII, 3.3 where Jesus Christ is mentioned. Also Origen refers (Tom. X, 17 on Matt. 13:55 and Contra Celsum, I, 47; II, 13) to a passage in Josephus to the effect that the destruction of Jerusalem was a punishment for the murder of James. The passage is not found in the extant text of Josephus.

²It is defended by Lightfoot, op. cit., p. 366, Mayor, op. cit., p. lviii, J. Weiss, op. cit., and E. Schwartz, "Zu Eusebius' Kirchengeschichte I. Das Martyrium Jakobus des Gerechten," Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft, V (1903), 59 f., Zahn, Forschungen, op. cit., VI, 301-305 and Schürer, op. cit., I, II, 186 f. suspect the genuineness of the passage.

The other account of the death of James comes to us from Hegesippus through Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. II, 23:

To the government of the church in conjunction with the apostles succeeded the Lord's brother, James,-- he whom all from the time of the Lord to our own day call the Just, as there were many named James. And he was holy from his mother's womb; wine and strong drink he drank not, nor did he eat flesh; no razor touched his head, he anointed himself not with oil, and used not the bath. To him alone was it permitted to enter the Holy Place, for neither did he wear wool, but linen clothes. And alone he would enter the Temple, and be found prostrate on his knees beseeching pardon for the people, so that his knees were callous like a camel's in consequence of his continually kneeling in prayer to God and beseeching pardon for the people. Because of his exceeding righteousness he was called the Just and Oblias,¹ which is in Greek 'Bulwark of the People,' and Righteousness, as the prophets declare concerning him.

Therefore certain of the seven sects among the people, already mentioned by me, in the Memoirs, asked him, 'What is the door of Jesus?' and he said that He was the Saviour--of whom some accepted the faith that Jesus is the Christ. Now the aforesaid sects were not believers either in a resurrection or in One who should come to render to every man according to his deeds; but as many as believed did so because of James. So, since many of the rulers, too, were believers, there was a tumult of the Jews and scribes and Pharisees, for they said there was danger that all the people would expect Jesus the Christ. Accordingly they said, when they had met together with James: 'We entreat thee, restrain the people, since it has gone astray unto Jesus, holding him to be the Christ. We entreat thee to persuade concerning Jesus all those who come to the day of the passover, for we all listen to thee. For we and all the people testify to thee that thou art just and that thou respectest not persons. Do thou therefore persuade the

¹For two divergent views as to the meaning of Oblias in this passage cf. C. C. Torrey, "James, the Just and his name Oblias," Journal of Biblical Literature LXIII (1944), 93-98 and H. J. Schoeps, Aus frühchristliche Zeit (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1950), pp. 120-125.

people concerning Jesus, not to go astray, for all the people and all of us listen to thee. Take thy stand therefore on the pinnacle of the Temple, that up there thou mayest be well seen, and thy words audible to all the people. For because of the pass-over all the tribes have come together, with the gentiles also.'

So the aforesaid scribes and Pharisees set James on the pinnacle of the Temple, and called to him and said, 'O thou, the Just, to whom we all ought to listen, since the people is going astray after Jesus the crucified, tell us what is the door of Jesus.' And with a loud voice he answered, 'Why do you ask me concerning the Son of Man? and he sitteth himself in heaven on the right hand of the great Power and shall come on the clouds of heaven.' And when many were convinced and gave glory for the witness of James, and said, 'Hosanna to the son of David,' then again the same scribes and Pharisees said to one another, 'We were wrong to permit such a testimony to Jesus; but let us go up and cast him down, that through fear they may not believe him.' And they cried out saying, 'Ho, ho! even the Just has gone astray,' and they fulfilled the Scripture written in Isaiah, Let us away with the Just, because he is troublesome to us; therefore they shall eat the fruits of their doings.

Accordingly they went up and cast the Just down. And they said one to another, 'Let us stone James the Just,' and they began to stone him, since he was not killed by the fall. But he turned, and knelt down, saying, 'I beseech thee, Lord God Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' And so, as they were stoning him, one of the priests of the sons of Rechab, the son of the Rechabim, mentioned by Jeremiah the prophet, cried out, saying, 'Stop! What are ye doing? The Just prays for you.' And a certain one of them, one of the fullers, taking the club with which he pounds clothes, brought it down on the head of the Just; and so he suffered martyrdom.

And they buried him there on the spot, near the Temple, and his monument still remains near the Temple. A true witness has he become both to Jews and Greeks that Jesus is the Christ. And immediately Vespasian besieges them.

The consensus of opinion of New Testament scholars is that the report of Hegesippus is unreliable as an historical

source for information concerning James.¹ The passage is obviously legendary² and represents an attempt to make out of James an ascetic and martyr. Lightfoot's evaluation of Hegesippus' account is worth noting:

There is much in this account which cannot be true: the assigning to him a privilege which was confined to the high-priest alone . . . is plainly false, . . . Moreover the account of his testimony and death, which follows, not only contradicts the brief contemporary notice of Josephus, but is in itself so melodramatic and so full of high improbabilities that it must throw discredit on the whole context.³

Since this is the case we must exclude the Hegesippus account as a source for gaining additional light on the character of James. The New Testament record and the additional information from Josephus stand as our only reliable sources⁴ and there is nothing revealed in either about the character of James, the Lord's brother, which is not consistent with that which we find written in the Epistle.⁵

¹Despite this fact A. Meyer uses the Hegesippus passage to demonstrate that James was a strong advocate of the Jewish law. Op. cit., p. 110.

²Cf. Dibelius, op. cit., p. 14.

³Op. cit., p. 366 f.

⁴For subsequent tradition concerning the Lord's brother cf. Ropes, op. cit., pp. 68-74.

⁵Even the lack of mention of the example of Jesus Christ is not an insurmountable difficulty. James' preference for the Old Testament over the word or example of Jesus may be evidence that in Jewish tradition the Old Testament passage was already connected with the particular teaching or injunction

The three points listed above, i. e., (1) the similarity of the language of the Epistle with Acts 15; (2) dependence upon the Jewish tradition; and (3) the consistency of the historical notices concerning the character of James, the Lord's brother, with the contents of the Epistle, taken with other factors already discussed, e. g., the literary character and thought content, point convincingly to the traditional authorship.¹

being made and would be more familiar to Jews who were accustomed to frequenting the synagogue. Cf. Selwyn, op. cit., p. 367.

¹Mention should be made here of a variation of the traditional authorship theory suggested first by Oesterley and followed by W. L. Knox, "The Epistle of James," op. cit. This theory assigns only certain parts of the Epistle, the more Judaic sections, to the Lord's brother. To these there have been added subsequently other elements. Knox attempts to isolate the original text and suggests that the remainder of the Epistle is a Hellenistic commentary on the original Hebraic text (see above, p. 38). The contents of the Epistle do not warrant such unrestrained dissection. In the appended note to chapter three and in chapter five we have shown that the Hellenistic element in the Epistle has been exaggerated. There is no convincing evidence to show that James, the Lord's brother could not have written the entire Epistle.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

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CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

Our purpose has been to inquire into the origin, literary character, historical and religious significance of the Epistle of James. The general result has been to re-affirm the traditional views concerning the Epistle, particularly those relative to the authorship. The following conclusions were reached.

(1) Although the Epistle was received late into the canon of Scripture it was early known among the leaders of the Church. Its late acceptance was probably due to its peculiar theological contents and its lack of a claim to apostolic authorship.

(2) The Epistle reveals literary connections with the fluid synoptic tradition and especially the early Christian catechetical material. Its relationship to Paul is non-literary, i. e., the debated passage 2:14-26 is not a refutation of any particular passage in a Pauline writing. It is rather a denunciation of a misunderstanding of Paul's preaching before the writing of any of his extant letters.

(3) The Epistle is not a letter. Its similarities to the early Jewish synagogue sermons suggest the possibility

that we have here a series of collected and edited (probably by James himself) excerpts from synagogue sermons preached in the Hellenistic synagogues of Jerusalem by the leader of the Mother Church. To these an epistolary heading has been given for general circulation in the church.

(4) A re-examination of the language of the Epistle, a major difficulty with the traditional authorship since the beginning of the modern criticism of the Epistle, reveals a good command of the Greek language by the author. However, the Greek is not without Semitic influences. The extent of the penetration of the Greek language into Jewish Palestine, a penetration which was far deeper and widespread than previously supposed, and the peculiar necessity for James, the head of the Jerusalem church to master the language, suggests the definite possibility of his having penned the Epistle.

(5) The entire contents of the Epistle bear out this contention. While admitting the difficulty of certain "Hellenistic" and supposed anti-Gnostic passages, the basic tone of the Epistle is Jewish and in places definitely rabbinic. There is nothing in the Epistle which is inconsistent with the historical notices of James in the New Testament and Josephus. The account of Hegesippus, which has so colored the character of James, must be rejected on critical grounds.

(6) The Epistle arose at a time preceding Paul's mission to the Gentiles, but after Pauline ideas and formulas

were known in the church. The time immediately following Paul's year-long preaching ministry at Antioch and before the famine visit to Jerusalem is offered as a suggested juncture for the assembling, editing and circulation of the Epistle. Other factors such as the lack of mention of the Gentile question, the social situation, the eschatological teaching, and the concept of faith point to an early date.

(7) The superscription reveals that the Epistle is addressed to the whole Christian Church, and the general nature of the exhortations would seem to bear this out. But James also has in mind the special needs of the Antioch Christians and he addressed 2:14-26 in particular to that need.

(8) There is good evidence for a Palestinian provenance.

(9) All the above conclusions bear out the contention that James, the Lord's brother, a natural child of Mary and Joseph subsequent to the supernatural birth of Jesus, is the author of the Epistle of James.

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